

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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LOST AT THE SOUTH POLE; OR

THE KINGDOM OF ICE.

BY CAPT. THOS. H. WILSON.
AND OTHER STORIES



For weeks they had sailed this endless sea, seeking an outlet. The channel through which they had entered was closed by mountains of ice.

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Stories of Adventure

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THE KINGDOM OF ICE

By CAP'T THOS. H. WILSON

CHAPTER I.

THE DERELICT BRIG.

In June of the year 1880, exactly fifteen degrees south of the Equator, and bearing sou'-sou'-west, a peculiar looking craft was making rapid headway in a becalmed sea. To one unfamiliar with her character this might have seemed strange, as she seemed to be propelled by neither sail nor steam. In appearance she was a dismayed yacht, with the exception of her deck, which was of quite a uniform smoothness from stem to stern, being broken only by a square bit of iron railing surrounding the entrance to the cabin, or below deck.

A close scrutiny would have revealed the fact that her hull was of plates of steel, and she carried forward a small rifled cannon. Upon her bow was the name Eclipse.

The Eclipse was an experiment in the line of electric vessels. Her propelling power was furnished by two powerful dynamos, and she was the invention of Professor Dionysius Hamilton, a most noted scientist and electrician.

The electric yacht was the property of Hon. Sylvester Singleton, a New York millionaire, who was at the present moment standing upon her deck with the sailing master, Captain David Adams. Mr. Singleton was a florid-complexioned, stout man, and a thorough gentleman. His companion, Captain Adams, was a man of middle age, with honest, open countenance and bluff manners—in fact, a good type of the sea captain of to-day.

"We are making a good southing, Mr. Singleton," Captain Adams was saying. "We shall soon make the Tropic of Capricorn. Heavier seas, sir, and stiffer winds after that."

"Indeed!" commented Mr. Singleton. "How far may we be from the coast of Brazil?"

"Not more than three hundred miles from Rio Janeiro at this moment, sir."

"And we had ought to make Buenos Ayres——"

"About next Thursday, sir, barring accidents. We should not be far from the Isle of Trinidad now."

"Splendid!" cried Mr. Singleton, rubbing his hands exuberantly. "I tell you, Adams, this electric business beats your sail and steam all out. Why, by my reckoning, we have made an average of thirty-five miles an hour right along. As fast as a railroad train, is it not?"

"It beats me," declared the sailing master. "That old chap, who seems to carry lightning in his bones, is a wonderful man. Why, do you know he is downstairs there now with the boys, working on a new method of navigating the air by means of electrical currents? He beats me, be sure."

The "old chap" to whom Captain Adams referred was no other than the distinguished Professor Hamilton. To attempt a voyage with the Eclipse without the professor was, to Mr. Singleton, an utter impossibility. His faith in the eccentric old scientist and inventor was like that of the heathen for his idol.

The words had scarcely left Adams' lips when there was the sound of laughter from the companion-way, and two athletic young men sprang upon deck, followed more slowly by Professor Hamilton himself, a man of medium height, rather stoop-shouldered and white-bearded, but with an air of eccentricity which was a distinguishing trait. It did not require a second glance from even a novice to see that Professor Hamilton was the idol of the two young men, who were respectively Bob Singleton and Dick Morris.

Bob was Mr. Singleton's own son, and as fine, handsome a youth as one seldom sets eyes upon. His features were clear-cut and betokened manly traits. He was about five feet nine inches in height, and had graduated from the best gymnasium in New York. Bob's mental gifts were in all respects equal to his physical, and Mr. Singleton had reason to feel proud of him.

Dick Morris was his college chum, and save for the difference in complexion, Dick being light while Bob was dark, they might well have passed for brothers. They were inseparable friends.

Mr. Singleton's business was that of a diamond merchant, and he annually made a trip to Buenos Ayres to purchase the richest and purest gems from the South American miners. Upon the present trip he had given Bob permission to accompany him with his chum, Dick Morris.

Dick Morris was an orphan with a large estate in trust for him in New York. He was, therefore, to a large extent his own master.

"The triple thermic motor is nothing, boys," the professor was saying, excitedly, as they came up from the cabin. "I tell you steam as a motive power should be obsolete. Electricity is the most powerful agent of force known to man, and to successfully govern and handle it means to overcome every obstacle in the path of man."

Mr. Singleton laughed boisterously at this outburst from the scientist.

"Still at it, Dionysius?" he cried. "Ybu deign to come out of your tub once in a while then. I haven't seen you on deck for three days. I think this is a conspiracy of Bob's and Dick's."

"Eh—yes, I think so," sputtered the professor. "Well, I am apt to wax warm in argument upon the electrical subject. Never mind, some day we will have a great electric air-ship."

The boys with the professor passed on to the bow where, differing from a sailing vessel, the pilot-house was located. It was nothing more than an elevation of the deck directly in place of the bowsprit, and had a thick plate glass front. It was an exceedingly convenient arrangement for the man at the wheel, for his vision had unbounded sweep of the ocean. To give a detailed account of the many queer devices and wonderful appliances with which the Eclipse was equipped would require a volume, therefore we will try and content ourselves with an introduction of them as the story progresses.

By the wheel house was a brass railing intended for the

lookout, and here the boys with the professor came to a halt. The breeze was beginning to quicken now, and the calm expanse of sea to ripple. The sun was dropping lower in the sky.

Professor Dionysius kept up a running discourse upon the mighty subject of electrical discoveries and possibilities, and the boys listened, as was their wont, with deep interest. A half hour passed in this manner, and Mr. Singleton and Captain Adams had moved up and joined them, when Dick Morris, who had been gazing horizonwards, gave a thrilling cry:

"Look! What is that?"

Instantly all eyes were turned in the indicated direction. A long, black object was certainly visible upon the surface of the sea, distant perhaps a mile and a half. To the untrained eyes of the boys it might have been a rock or a small island.

"An island," cried Bob.

"Where is it?" asked Mr. Singleton, adjusting his glass. "Pshaw! My eyesight has gone back on me. Take the glass, Adams."

The captain of the electric yacht was ready to do this, and quickly scrutinized the distant object. Meanwhile, the boys had been making excited remarks concerning the object, and Professor Dionysius was also interested.

"Some monster of the cetacean family," he declared. "Maybe a valuable scientific discovery. By all means let us visit it, Mr. Singleton."

By way of reply, Mr. Singleton leaned forward and spoke through a tube to the man in the wheel-house. Instantly the yacht's course was changed. Captain Adams shut up his glass now, and exclaimed to the anxious hearers:

"It is a derelict!"

"What? A wreck, Mr. Adams?" asked Bob, breathlessly.

"Yes."

Instantly the boys were excited greatly, and they could not restrain themselves until the yacht drew rapidly nearer, so that it was seen with certainty that Captain Adams was right, and the distant object was a floating wreck, plainly a dismasted brig. Her deck was nearly on a level with the water-line, and it was plain that she must be near the point of sinking. Such an object floating in mid-ocean up on the equator could not but be invested with a deep abiding interest.

To the boys the yacht seemed to creep nearer the wreck, so great was their excitement. Then a cry broke from Bob.

"There is a man aboard her! See! he is waving a white flag."

It is needless to say that all were thrilled with this truth. A man was plainly visible standing upon the vessel's rail. To the boys matters were beginning to assume a tinge of romance. The idea of picking up in mid-ocean the sole survivor of a wreck was a glorious one. They began to foresee a thrilling tale of experiences from the lips of the shipwrecked man. If anybody was disappointed it was Professor Dionysius, who was eager for some new scientific discovery.

Nearer drew the yacht to the derelict brig until its sole occupant could be plainly seen. The Eclipse hove to about fifty yards from the sinking vessel, and a boat was put out from a trap-door, by a skilful bit of mechanism, all the invention of Professor Dionysius. While this was being done, Captain Adams hailed the castaway.

"Ahoy! What vessel is that?"

"The brig Skylark from Boston. Captain Terry McCarty."

"What is the matter?"

"Struck a gale off Cape Horn, and all masts went by the board. The rest of the crew, cap'n an' five men, washed overboard. You'll have to hurry, for the vessel is in a fair way to go to the bottom any minute."

"Aye, aye!"

The yacht's boat by this time had covered half the distance, but the survivor of the wreck, evidently not caring to take chances, leaped into the water and began to swim desperately. He was none too soon, for the unwieldy hulk with a lunge went down, leaving a swirling, eddying tempest of waters behind.

Into this vortex the castaway was drawn and was for a moment invisible.

"He has gone down!" cried several, breathlessly. But the fear was unfounded, for the next moment the sea became calm, and he was seen struggling in the white foam not twenty-five yards from the yacht's boat. It was easy work to haul him in, and in a few moments later he was safe aboard the Eclipse.

Crew and all gathered about the rescued man, but Captain Adams would allow no questions asked him until he had been taken below and given a change of clothing and something to eat.

When he appeared upon deck one would hardly have known him for the half-famished, dilapidated personage he had appeared upon coming from the wreck.

He was an out-and-out seafaring man—an American, short and stout, with the rolling walk and trouser hitch of a genuine tar. His visage was sun-burned and furrowed, he being certainly a man past sixty years of age, though there was a kindly gleam in his beady brown eyes.

He begged a chew of tobacco from one of the crew, and then, rolling up to Captain Adams and Mr. Singleton, pulled his foretop in the style of forty years ago.

"At your service, captain," he exclaimed in a gruff voice. "Savin' your making sight of the old Skylark, jest as you did, I make free to say that it's the lid of Davy Jones' locker what might have closed over Ben Blunt fer sartin. I thankee, sirs."

"How came you in such a fix, my man?" asked Captain Adams.

The old tar hitched up his trousers and shifted his quid, making another low bow.

"Afore I tell ye that, I might make free to say, sir, that I've been in the queen's navee an' aboard Uncle Sam's frigates in every port of entry in the world, an' I've seen many craft, but hang me for a porpoise if I ever set eyes on so queer a sea witch as this. What mought she be?"

"Well," replied Mr. Singleton with a smile, she is an electric yacht."

The old tar's mouth opened wide and he looked at Mr. Singleton incredulously.

"Burst my cable!" he exclaimed. "That drags my anchor. I don't make any shift to say that I'm out of soundings, cap'n, all respect to ye. In my day ships went with sails an' masts, but to my thinkin' you are not any better off than I was a few moments ago on the old Skylark."

The eyes of the crew stuck out with surprise. Was the man a greenhorn or mentally aberrated?"

"Don't ye know what a yacht is?" cried one of the crew derisively. "Reckon you must have come from way back." Just for an instant an angry gleam flashed from Ben Blunt's eyes. But he quickly changed and laughed carelessly.

"Clew up thar, messmate," he exclaimed. "In my day I've seen a man caught on the figger-head with a marling spike for less jawing nor that. Ben Blunt ain't so great a greeny as you mought reckon, if he ain't got a hitch on these new-fangled crafts. Reckin I know a yacht, but in my day they didn't cruise in the Tropic of Capricorn with so slim a craft."

"You talk as though you had been off the seas a good many years," said Captain Adams.

"Yes," muttered the queer old tar, in a dazed way. "Brace me up, messmates. I own I'm gone by. This ar' a new craft for me."

"It is strange," declared Mr. Singleton.

"When I used to captain the old Nancy Free from New Bedford I wouldn't back water for no man what ever trod a plank. 'Pears to me I did hear palaver 'bout a man named Fulton building a boat to go by steam. Never knew the hitch on the craft, though. Thirty-five years, messmates—from a young man to an old man—good while to be laid by an' never sight a Union Jack."

"What!" exclaimed Captain Adams, with astonishment. "You don't mean to say that you have drifted on that wreck for thirty-five years?"

The interest was now at fever heat. The more one gazed upon Blunt the more antiquated his manners appeared. What mystery was this?"

"No," replied the old tar. "By my reckoning I've drifted about six weeks on the Skylark. But I make free to admit that I'm a stranger. I ain't seen New Bedford for thirty-five years."

Where have you been all these years?"

Ben Blunt ejected his quid and hitched up his trousers.

"Messmates," he exclaimed, with something like a grandiloquent sweep of his hand, "you mought reckon me a fool, but you ain't got my bearings right yet. Heave anchor, and come aboard, till I tell yer a bit of a yarn what ain't a yarn, but is the gospel truth. I have been where the foot of no Yankee or Britisher ever trod before. I have seen a country what no man ever knew of before, and where you can pick up lumps of gold as big as your fist, which are as common as cobbles on a New England beach. I have lived thirty-five years in a kingdom of ice, as you might call it, with the queerest people you ever heard tell of. Avast there, shipmates! I'm givin' ye no yarn, but the solemn gospel truth."

The effect of this astonishing declaration may be imagined.

With open wonderment Ben Blunt was viewed by his hearers. The interest was at fever heat. Here was a man picked up adrift at sea, with the manners of forty years past, who talked of an unknown country and race of people. What wonder could surpass this?

The two boys, Bob and Dick, were enthralled with the wonderment of the thing. Professor Dionysius foresaw disclosures concerning a new country and was agog. The others were scarcely less interested, so when Mr. Singleton asked for further particulars he voiced the unanimous sentiment.

The sun was just dipping in the western sky, leaving a pathway of gold. The beauties of that calm evening on the deep cannot be adequately given with the pen, but it was never forgotten by those who listened to Ben Blunt, sitting up on coil of rope as he detailed a story, which for wondrous detail and seeming impossibility was surely never equaled by the pen of the romancer.

Our boys, Dick and Bob, listened spellbound until the last word was spoken.

CHAPTER II.

BEN BLUNT'S STORY.

The electric yacht was making a steady eight knots an hour, a moderate rate of speed, and the man at the wheel was keeping her steadily upon her southwesterly course. Everything was snug and shipshape, so to speak, and there was consequently no interruption as Ben Blunt progressed with his narrative.

"I reckon 'twas 'bout the year 1850, messmates, that I chalked my name onto the sailing papers of the old whaler Betsey, and swung out of New Bedford harbor for a cruise in southern seas. The Betsey was a spanking good ship, you bet, from maintop to keelson, and her sailing master, Uriah Belden, was 'bout shipshape and reg'lar, though he had the name of an 'unlucky captain.' I was a greeny in those days, or mebbe, bein' younger, I hadn't much fear of the devil and such like, an' when they told me ther rats had left the Betsey, an' she'd never cum home, I jest took the joke easy an' made free to think I knew better than men what were my masters.

"Anyhow, I went with ther Betsey. We reckoned to reach Cape Horn in December. Afore we reached Staaten Land, may I be doused fer a sculpin, shipmates, if the seas didn't run mountains, an' the ship made water so fast that we hitched onto Cap'en Belden an' tried to get him to put back to Buenos Ayres; but the cap'n reckined as how we'd hev ter lay up till spring, an' as we were fair to weather the Cape, an' he was stiff an' stubborn, we gin him a free course, an' the Betsey went inter ther rollers.

"Rollers, nevvys? Reckin you fair-weather craft what never rode anything wuss nor a Sandy Hook sneeze ain't got great bearin's on them kind of seas. Great lobster pots! the wind blew in guns, the air was chock full of slinging spume and foam, the waves were like hills, and the Betsey wollered in the trough of the sea like a hog in ther mud.

"Let her rip! the cap'en said. 'If she has got any ribs in her she's got to use 'em now!'

"An' you can bet your copper-screws she did show 'em, like a beauty that she was, an' ther warn't a man in that crew but what counted up his sins and reckoned on safe pins that he'd never see home agin. Even the cap'en got a little frightened as ther weather didn't show no signs of lettin' up. Save me, shipmates, the air was so chilly that a man would freeze to the rigging, an' thar he'd stay 'cept some on us would go up an' cut him down, an' then, shiver my deadlights, you would git froze yerself if yer waited ter catch yer breath. Ther ship didn't make even headway, we couldn't stretch a bag of canvas the third day in the Horn seas, an' the turn at the wheel were like havin' ther green sickness, 'twould toss ye 'bout so.

"One minnit the old Betsey was like an eggshell on the tip-top of a mounting, an' ther next minnit, by ther ghost of Neptune, ther would cum a chop sea that would nigh toss yer inwards outen ye. Save me, but a man could only travel 'round the deck hitched to the end of a cable, an' then the wind would be knocked outen him like leg o' mutton stuffin' when the sea broke like rollin' thunder on the decks an' made the old Betsey shiver like an ell in hot water.

"The Betsey run like this for four days, an' we couldn't set any course. The goin' down of the sea was our only hope, but there didn't seem much chance for this, for the wind cum in guns, an' the sea got heavier an' stronger, an' blow me fer blubber, shipmates, we reckoned we were done for! Every minnit took us a further sou'ring, an' Cap'n Belden reckoned we'd soon make the Antartic Circle.

"This was not much of a cheerful thing to think about, fer it would take a month o' Sundays to beat back into the Pacific agin. An' now the duffers in the fo'cas'le began to mutiny, an' got the crutchet into ther hammer heads that Cap'n Belden was the cause of all on it, an' that Neptune wanted him fer a subjec'. Great whales and crocuses! how ther old cap'n did throw round, fer he was a hard head an' a reg'lar tussler, an' he downed that coop o' sculpins in less time 'n it took ther Betsy to show her teeth to the gale.

"There was a powerful sight 'bout the old cap'n that skeered the men, an' they let up on him arter a while. But some on 'em prayed an' cursed an' I got so round sick of it that, though the air war bracin' cold, I hauled my woolen cap over my ears an' started to go on deck, when the ship give a terrible heel to starb'd an' every man went offen his feet like a dowlin'-pin. I was sure that was Betsey's go-down, an' I made fer the main hatch.

"Bet yer bumpkins I slid back ther hatch an' jumped on deck. Jest then a flash o' lightnin' showed me what was the matter. Save me, shipmates, the man at the wheel was gone! Poor fellow! He was done up by the cold and went overboard, and there was jest a bit of danger that the Betsey would broach to with her tiller all free. I grabbed it an' fetched her head two points to the wind just in time to save her. The lightnin' was terrible, shipmates. Ye could read the chart as easy as if ye was in the way of the binnacle.

"When mornin' cum the sea was easier, but cold—oh, so cold. From maintop to water-line the ship was coated with ice. The day was a hard one, but the duffers at the pumps managed to get some water outen her hold, an' she was more limber.

"We felt a bit better, shipmates, an' changed course a point. But, bless you, sirs, that night the wind came on a hurricane, an' the ship bent so that we knew fer sartin she'd never see port again. How she stood the night out is mor'n I kin tell ye, but when mornin' cum at least, salivate me, friends, but there was a long coastline on our weather bow. In course we reckoned it to be land, but it was white an' glarin', an' mought hev bin an iceberg.

"An' now we was a-dodgin' bergs all round us. This was sartin proof that we war in the Antarctic Ocean. The ship rolled easier in a grand swell an' every man, wrapped in furs, which whalers allus carry, you know, was on deck. Never seen a more beautiful sight, messmates. 'Twas like a picture.

"Thar would be an iceberg bigger nor an islan' floatin' by us, an' we could almost seem to see people livin' an' movin' about on it. Thar was arches an' highfalutin' work like the winders of a Liverpool church. Dock my old hulk, but it was grand! Ther cap'n managed to get our bearin's, an' we were completely keel-hauled to know that we were 79 degrees south latitude by 105 degrees 7 seconds longitude west—further south than ever any man had ever bin, savin' p'raps Cap'n Cook, who, all said an' done, only made ther 71st parallel, an' then sed a man with ship could go no further. Well, our eyes stuck out like ther buttons on a coxswain's jacket, an' not wan but reckoned we were doomed.

"Why? I'll tell ye the Betsey was makin' water like a Chinese junk, an' never could be calked an' fixed up to make a home voyage in them latitudes. Thar warn't enny chance fer bein' picked up, I tell ye, for no ship ever sailed them icy seas.

"Thar's allers a way provided, shipmates, an' we cum inter a little harbor in that Antarctic continent. We hove anchor an' went ashore in the jolly boat. Thar warn't much but snow an' ice everywhar, but we found some barren rocks an' stunted grasses, an' finally found a dry cave in the cliffs.

"We rigged a launch an' jest toted the Betsey's stuff, all on it we could, over to the cave. We hung up sails an' skin, an' you can reckon that it was pooty cosy an' snug in that little den arter we fixed it. But, bless ye, sirs! there was no certainty 'bout anything. Arter the Betsey's stores war gone we mought starve, 'cept there was some sort of seals or game to be shot alongshore. But we made all free an' easy an' tied up for the best. We fetched off all the ship's powder an' guns an' harpoons, an' even ther cannon. To make ye sure we hadn't been any too spry, I make free to say that we hed just got 'em off when the Betsey made her bow and went down in five fathoms. We hed her boats an' the best part of her, an', shipmates, had we been cast away in another part of the world we wouldn't have cared a chipper, but—in them parts—we couldn't help feelin' blue.

"We made a fire in the cave, an' soon found that thar was plenty of seals, bears an' ducks about, so we didn't want for fresh meat.

"We lived over and above six months in this cave afore we tried to explore the coast. Then we took a reef about us, an' the weather begun to change, flocks of birds appeared, an' the

sun run higher—sign of a change in seasons. The Antarctic summer was comin' on, that is if ye can count it summer. The ice floated outen the bays and offen the cliffs, an' some bushes and mosses came up. If we could have raised the Betsey we would hev felt better, but we couldn't.

"Cap'n Belden an' I an' four of the crew started out explorin'. Great landcrabs! We traveled around on snowshoes an' sledges, an' ye never see such a country. But we didn't find any sign of human beings, an' we was disapp'inted. Not even an Eskimo. Cap'n Belden got it into his head that if a man could get within the Polar Circle, or that land contiguous to the South Pole, he'd find perpetual summer; but we thought him crazy.

"It was good talk around the fire, an' we jawed over it until we loosened the screws in our jaw angles; but to git thar was another thing.

"But it mought have been good reckonin', fer all the birds what passed over our heads all went in that direction, and it was safe countin' on the possibility of a warm valley down beyond the ice country. But we had no way of carrying provisions, an' had to stay to home.

"When the bay was clear we sometimes rigged up one of the ship's boats an' cruised as far as we dared to northward in the hope of hailing a ship. But it was like looking for whales on an oyster farm.

"A year passed, shipmates, an' we kept to the cave. Two—three years went by, an' there warn't a day some on us didn't climb the cliffs and keep a weather-eye out fer a sail. Then one of the duffers, Jed Hansen, went to his long reckonin' in a crevasse. Then the mate died. Five years war reeled off, shipmates, an' four of our mates had been buried under the cliff.

"Reckin I ain't great strokes on the cryin' business, shipmates, but I blubbered like a narwhal whenever one of our mates kicked his last kick.

"I didn't make reckonin', though, that I was to be hauled up fer thirty more years on that terrible coast. How did we live an' keep soul an' body together all that time? Dunno, shipmates, save it was meant to be so. I was a young seaman, as chipper and taut as yer please, but I found I was growin' old fast. In course our ship's stores were gone, but there was heaps of wild animals an' ducks to be had for the shootin'. Powder give out, but we made bows and arrows out of roots, and snared game sometimes.

"There was times, shipmates, when I was happy and cheery, but, bless ye, it was a queer kind of cheer, an' I'd a-gin ten years o' my life to hev bin on the Battery in New York safe an' ship-shape."

"If we could have crawled outen that place we could hev all bin rich men, for some ways inland we got bearin's on a valley where in the streams ye could pick up hunks of gold as big as yer fist, but they might have been diamonds for all shift we could make of 'em."

"Fifteen years, shipmates, by the cap'n's log we had bin on that wild coast, and only three on us was ship-shape to say it. Myself, Long John Harper, and Belden. Fore another year Long John shuffled off, an' then directly after that the cap'n took sick of a fever an' dropped off, too.

"All alone, messmates, on the coast of that Antractic continent. You kin bet yer copper screws it was no easy berth. I kept good reckonin' of the seasons, an' chalked it down twenty-five years since the old Betsey dropped her keel in the bay, when, blow me fer blubber, ef I didn't have a queer fright."

"I was bracing out of the cavern one morning when I sighted a berg floating by in the harbor, an' if ye'd have cracked my main-top with a mawling spike ye couldn't hev shivered me wuss.

"Blow me, shipmates! It took the wind outen my sails, an' left me dead a-calm in a jiffy. I rubbed my eyes, but thar it was; no ship, no, but upon one end of that berg was a queer sight. An old man, shipmates, an' old craft with hair and whiskers as white as the snow, an' dressed in some kind of red fur like fox skin, an' a young girl, ship-shape as ye please, by his side. She was dressed in some kind of white furs, an', blow me, but she was the pootiest craft I ever saw in any land.

"They give me the hail and I 'hoyed back, but their lingo warn't mine, an' I pushed out the Betsey's boat an' went off to 'em."

"I could only jaw with 'em in signs, but I fetched 'em off to the cavern an' made 'em at home. No animals I ever heard spout 'bout ever wore furs like them they had.

"Well, shipmates, I got outen 'em arter some while that they

war two of a tribe of people which actually did live 'round about the South Pole, an' they were like no other people in the world. They got lost some way or other, an', I reckon, drifted out on this berg. That was all I could make outen it. But, blow me, they were the fairest skin craft I ever met in any waters, an' not like the Eskimo by a long haul.

"The old chap was a dignified craft, and walked about the cavern like a man-o'-war in a hurricane, striking his chest with his hands, an' spoutin' a lot of lingo I didn't know, but I made shift to get a hitch on it after a while, an' found out some reckonin' 'bout a kingdom of ice, as near as I could fetch it, all of a thousand miles in the interior. They didn't know much how to size me up, but we was good friends, an' they went crazy as a Patagonian seal over the effects of the Betsey, which I showed 'em, an' when I gin 'em reckonin' of my people.

"Mind yer eye they warn't savages. They were as chipper an' as genteel as any of yer American craft. They reckoned themselves 'Ignoos,' an' thar was another tribe with whom their people was allus at war, called the 'Moodas.'

"The old craft was the chief of the Ignoos, an' the pooty craft's name was Katuka. They had bin overhauled by the Moodas and set adrift on the iceberg. I made everything free an' easy for 'em, though they didn't mind the cold no more than nothin', bein' bred to it, ye see.

"After we had bin good company fer a week we rigged up some traps and steered a course fer the Ignoos country. But we never made port, an' had to bring tack an' cum back ag'in. This brought the old king's colors down, an' then, messmates, I began to feel kinder queer.

"I was never much struck with the fair craft, but I own up that chipper Katuka made me clew up canvas and haul to. We had got so that we could run together in a fair breeze, an' I soon made the reckonin' that I wanted her fer a convoy. Well, blow me, arter this I was all boxed up like a compass, an' finally we made a bow to the old man an' he married us.

"Ay, shipmates, thar warn't no minister craft thar, but the Great Power what holds the main helm has got it on his log as true as if there had been. Katuka was my wife, messmates, an' now I reckon you'll pardon an old salt for a little weakness of the main brace, for, blow me, shipmates, I ain't great soundings for what the landlubbers call love, but Katuka was to me what the blubber is to a live whale, an' till the time cums when Ben Blunt are called in ter old Father Neptune, he'll steer a clear course fer Katuka's sake."

At this juncture tears streamed down Blunt's face, and he arose and held his arms upward, while in a shaking voice, which moved his hearers greatly, he continued:

"She was heaps above me, messmates, a ragged old craft like me; I was only a duffer, I tell it to ye for a hard fact. She was an angel sent there by Heaven to shine up a few hours of this old wuthless hulk's life. For that, I'll ever make free to thank Him, but the taking away nigh killed me."

Blunt's head dropped upon his chest, and great quivering sobs broke from him. There was not a dry eye in the throng.

"I humbly ax yer pardin, shipmates, but I ain't 'zactly chicken-hearted, an' I never believed much in such a thing as love, but it nigh killed me when my little Ignoos wife died. The old king, her father, shuffled off first. Jest two years ago, shipmates, I wrapped the Betsey's flag, the Stars and Stripes, 'bout Katuka, an' buried her in the cave. She died in my arms, an' I promised to meet her in that port where we must all make anchor some day."

Again the old tar paused. Some minutes elapsed, no one venturing to speak; then he slowly raised his head and shrugged his shoulders.

"Arter a while, shipmates, I got lonely an' began to make a reckonin' for leaving the place. I had sized up a plan, an' arter taking a farewell of Katuka's grave, I made lines for it. I knew the bergs which passed went into northern seas. Why couldn't I get aboard one and set a course, and trust to luck for meeting a ship? It was my only haul, shipmates, so I made free to board one with all the provisions I could stow away. I set sail, or at least the berg began to drift northward, an' with one of the Betsey's boats aboard, felt quite ship-shape. I hed six casks of fresh water an' six months' meat with me, so I couldn't starve for a while. By my reckonin' it was a good while that I lived on that berg, shipmates, but I began to find out that I couldn't live much longer on it, for it began to grow smaller an' smaller, till it wasn't much bigger than a ship's deck. Then, by good luck, I sighted the old Sky-lark. Messmates, this are my story."

These last words were spoken in a weary, incoherent voice,

and struggling to his feet, Ben Blunt reeled across the deck. Arrived there, he turned and faced his wondering and spell-bound hearers, while a most terrible change came over his rugged face. Deep, furrowed lines appeared; in that moment he aged twenty years; his limbs shook as with the palsy, and his voice was weak and piping as he cried:

"Great figgerheads, messmates, I guess your hot air is too much fer Ben Blunt! I've lived too long on the ice. B-r-ugh! I stifle—"

He would have fallen, but Captain Adams caught him. Only for a moment, though, and then he started from the captain's grasp, and great beaded veins stood out upon his brow, while his eyes seemed to leap from their sockets.

"There—there!" he cried, in a wild, hoarse voice. "Do you not see her? There is Katuka—there she floats—it's a calm sea. Port your helm! Pipe to quarters! Ah, ha!"

At a motion from Captain Adams stout seamen seized the unfortunate man, else he would have cleared the rail. It required their best strength to hold him, and the lamentable, appalling truth was forced upon all that through some mighty overtax of the mental system poor Ben Blunt, after thirty-five years' exile in the unexplored regions of the Antarctic Circle, had found deliverance only to become transformed into a stark, raving madman.

CHAPTER III.

LOST AT THE SOUTH POLE.

With much difficulty the unfortunate man was carried below and securely ironed. His shrieks filled the yacht, though, and his sufferings were intense, until the morning of the next day, when he sank into a stupor, out of which he never came.

It is hardly necessary to say that all on board the yacht were deeply shocked with the sad termination of Ben Blunt's career, as well as impressed with the wonderful and no doubt truthful narrative he had rendered. The boys, Bob and Dick, were perhaps the deepest affected.

Everything possible was done to bring the unfortunate man out of the death spell.

His sudden collapse might have been explained in many ways. He was a reasonably old man, and the mental shock suffered in recounting his experiences with Katuka, together with the change—a radical one—from cold to tropical climes, was, no doubt, the prime cause.

His body was buried with all the naval honors which the yacht afforded, and there was not a dry eye aboard when his shrouded form vanished in the blue depths.

The rest of the voyage to Buenos Ayres, the strange adventures of Ben Blunt in the unexplored Antarctic seas was the almost exclusive theme of discussion.

Some while before the yacht sighted the South American coast a daring plan had been formed by Bob Singleton and his chum Dick Morris.

This they did not at once make known to Mr. Singleton, and involved no less than a trip to the Antarctic continent for the sole purpose of exploration and scientific research.

The scheme darkly hinted was accepted by Professor Dionysius enthusiastically, for that ardent votary of science would have almost given his life at any moment in its interests.

But Mr. Singleton was more experienced than the boys, and more fully aware of the enormity of such an undertaking.

"Why, only think of it," cried Bob, in enthusiastic argument, "we would cover ourselves immortally with glory to be able to verify such a discovery as a race of people at the South Pole."

"It is hardly likely that you would succeed," objected Mr. Singleton. "You would get down there in the ice and freeze to death."

"Pshaw!" cried Bob pettishly.

The boys argued long, and Mr. Singleton was very strong in his opposition. But in spite of this it could be seen that he took great pride in their pluck, and was really infused with the idea of their winning fame in such an enterprise of world-wide importance.

The strain brought to bear upon him at last began to tell, and the climax was capped when Mr. Adams came forward with the declaration that he would give his knowledge and skill to the enterprise, and guarantee to bring the yacht safely home.

It was a hard struggle, but the boys won.

By the first steamer orders were sent to New York for extra scientific apparatus by Professor Dionysius' directions, and all were busy with great preparations for the wonderful cruise. The yacht, though it was so called, was a vessel of wonderful

capacity, and there was room in the hold for provisions for the limited crew for certainly five years. Ben Blunt had mentioned an abundance of game, which they depended upon after they should arrive at their destination.

Before the Eclipse started Mr. Singleton had a confidential talk with the professor and Captain Adams.

"It is a risky thing navigating these seas," he declared. "If you meet with a mishap, look out for the boys, Adams."

"Rest assured of that, sir," replied the yacht's captain.

"I shall wait three years. If within that time you do not return, I shall go after you."

Thus it happened that our heroes, Bob and Dick, started upon a novel and most adventurous expedition.

As it would perhaps be tedious to detail the incidents of the voyage from Buenos Ayres to the Antarctic seas, we will merely say that the Eclipse behaved splendidly, and one day found her keel cutting the waters of a smooth black sea, hemmed in with endless lines of ice.

For weeks they had sailed this same endless sea, Captain Adams' reckoning showing them to be certainly eighty degrees south latitude.

After a week of cruising about in this manner Captain Adams one day called Bob and Dick into the cabin, and with white face declared:

"Boys, I fear we have made a great mistake and all is up with us. This sea may not again be open for twenty years. I think our compass is affected by some strange magnetic current, and our bearings are all wrong. Where we are I cannot say, but the chilling truth is before us that we have been going wrong, for how long I do not know, and we are hopelessly lost."

CHAPTER IV.

BATTLING WITH A MYSTERIOUS UNSEEN FOE.

A terrible silence followed Captain Adams' declaration. The three inmates of the yacht's cabin, in plain realization of the awful contingency, sat quite still and gazed white-faced and terrified at each other.

The first to break the stillness, which was becoming oppressive, was Bob Singleton.

"What shall we do?"

The exclamation found an echo in the sinking hearts of his companions.

"We must do the best we can," declared Captain Adams, finally. "I shall keep the yacht cruising about these seas until I find some outlet."

"One moment," interposed Dick Morris. "Is not this the winter season at the South Pole?"

"I should say it was."

"Well, then, we need not lose hope, for the coming of spring may work many changes. I say it may."

"Let us hope so," declared Captain Adams hopefully. "Yet it is my belief that if any person desires to reach the South or North Poles, they must be prepared to only accomplish that end by first sacrificing their ship. That was the fate of Ben Blunt's party."

"Then you believe that we must lose the yacht and pass our lives here in order to accomplish our purpose?" asked Bob.

"That is what I believe."

The boys looked ruefully at each other and began to wish that they were back at Buenos Ayres. But the emotion was only momentary.

"Well, so be it!" cried Bob Singleton, with sudden spirit. "I for one am not willing to abandon the quest for the unknown race of people. Let us go on and make the discovery, and if, after that, we cannot get back to our country, we will be gratified in the knowledge that though it has cost us our lives, we have gained the greatest end that man ever attempted."

His words seemed to infuse Captain Adams and Dick, who sprang up, and the three crossed hands there in the cabin.

"That is the kind of stuff of which great explorers should be made!" cried Captain Adams. "Here we are in the land of ice. It is a situation we courted, and it would be the height of folly to give way to despair and abandon our great aspirations at the most critical moment. You have the right of it, Bob. Let us go on, even if it costs our lives."

The compact was made, and all three were much in earnest, but before another word could be said a little bell rang sharply at Bob's shoulder.

Instantly the young explorer put his ear to the rubber trumpet beside it and caught a single sentence:

"Come on deck, quick!"

"It is the professor!" cried Bob. "What can be the matter now?"

All three men sprang up the companionway, and at its head met the distinguished scientist, who was greatly excited.

"Remarkable discovery," he cried, his face aglow with his keen excitement. "Where is your gun, Master Bob? I must not lose him, for it will gain me the envy of all the savants in Europe to secure such a specimen for my cabinet."

"What is it?" impatiently asked Bob, cutting short the old man's remarks. "What is the matter now?"

In reply the professor leaped across the yacht's deck and pointed to a narrow strait between high walls of ice. A most astonishing sight met the gaze of all.

A large bird, strongly resembling an ostrich, of black and white plumage, was walking leisurely and with awkward gait across the ice toward the strait. Nothing like it had ever been seen by our friends.

"What is it?" cried Bob Singleton, and the query found an echo in the breasts of the others.

All eyes were turned upon the professor. But he was in a state of mighty excitement, and cried:

"It is surely a specimen of the extinct dodo family. I must not lose him!"

Bob waited for no second prompting, but dashed into the cabin and came out with his Remington rifle. He was a dead shot and the range was not so great but that a ball would reach the strange bird.

It was a moment of suspense as the rifle came to Bob's shoulder and his unerring eye glanced along the barrel. One brief instant, and then—

Crack!

The whip-like report rang out, the strange bird threw up its tremendous wings and a cry like that of a terrified human being pealed from it, and it seemed to stagger, but did not fall.

"Quick! fire again!" cried Professor Dionysius. "Don't let it get away."

It is likely that Bob would have obeyed the command, but a terrible warning cry came from the pilot-house, the bell rang in the cabin, and then our friends had just time to see a strange, white, rippling streak in the water coming straight for the yacht's side, when there was a mighty shock, the yacht seemed to be fairly lifted out of the water by some tremendous force, careened until her rail dipped, and every man was thrown from his feet.

Dick Morris was near the rail, and with the terrible shock was precipitated into the foaming waters and disappeared from sight.

The shock was but momentary, and Bob Singleton was the first to regain his feet. He had seen his chum disappear in the water and was possessed of but one impulse, which was to go to his rescue.

"Dick, for heaven's sake bear up," he cried wildly, rushing to the rail, and tossing him a rope.

Had not Dick been a good swimmer and a strong boy that ducking in the frigid waters might have proved his death.

A cry of joy went up from all as they saw that Dick was safe. In the excitement of effecting his rescue the strange cause of the shock to the yacht had been forgotten.

But only for a moment, then from lip to lip went the query:

"What was it?"

"A whale," cried one of the men.

"Where is it?" Professor Dionysius cried excitedly. "Where is the cetacean? Let me get a good aim at him."

"Do you call it a cetacean?" cried Bob, with surprise. "It must be a monster. I could not believe that a whale could give the yacht such a shock."

"I don't care what it is, I can spoil its little game!" cried the professor triumphantly. "It may be a sea serpent or an octopus, but just let me get a good aim and I will do for him."

The professor held something in his hand.

It was nothing more than a long, hollow rod, nickel-plated, and having a pouch like an air-gun at its butt. The professor drew a long, soft wad from his pocket and placed it in the breech, and then all saw that it was a curiously constructed air-gun.

"One of the greatest of my triumphs in the interests of science," declared the professor proudly. "A remarkable utilization of pneumatic pressure, by which a dynamite projectile sufficiently large to blow up this yacht can be conveyed through the air with good aim for half a mile."

All gazed with something like awe at Professor Dionysius. What sort of a man was this, who could even chain the lightning and make it subservient to his wishes? Truly, Colonel

Sylvester Singleton's faith in the venerable scientist was not misplaced.

The dynamite gun might prove the salvation of the yacht. Professor Dionysius seemed to always have an expedient for the overcoming of an obstacle. The hearts of all were fifty per cent. lighter, for the faith in the scientist's infallibility was great.

The professor held the dynamite gun in readiness for the unseen antagonist, prepared to give it a warm reception.

"I will blow it out of the water if it is as big as an ark," declared the scientist.

Though the strait between the ice walls where the strange giant bird had been seen was far astern, a black heap lying there upon the ice testified that Bob's shot had told.

But the "dodo," as Professor Dionysius had called it, was forgotten in the interest centering about the marine monster. The yacht was now flying through the water and rapidly nearing the western shore of the ice-bound sea.

Suddenly Bob, who was looking astern, saw the white rippling line in the water again, and saw that it was coming like a race-horse down upon the yacht. Quivering with excitement, he yelled:

"Aho, forward there! Here she comes again. Now, professor, now!"

CHAPTER V.

A CRITICAL SITUATION.

It was a most critical moment. The loud, warning cry of Bob Singleton was not needed, for the gaze of all had caught the approach of the foe, which now presented a different and terrifying appearance.

The line of water was a mighty ridge of white foam, beneath which the dim, dark outline of a black body could be seen. This would seem to lend color to the belief that the submarine monster might be a giant whale.

But if this was the case, surely it was a tremendous specimen and capable of moving with frightful velocity, for it gained upon the yacht with fearful swiftness.

On—on it came. All held their breaths and braced for what seemed certain to be another shock. Professor Dionysius was the coolest of all, and with the dynamite gun placed over the stern, waited a good sure aim.

The crisis came. The mighty sea monster was close upon the yacht. A great wall of foam rolled up, and then—

The pneumatic gun with a loud "ping," worked successfully under the manipulation of Professor Dionysius. The projectile hissed through the air and struck the water ten feet in front of the wall of foam. The result was not only tremendous, but awe-inspiring to witness.

The terrific force of dynamite was fully illustrated. Simultaneous with the striking of the water by the dynamite projectile, there was a tremendous upheaval of the surface of the sea. To a height of fifteen feet arose a mighty mound of white foam and water, and then an enormous black object rose out of the water nearly equal in size to a respectable island.

It was the sea monster.

The dynamite gun had done its work faithfully. The dreaded and mysterious foe of the yacht floated upon the surface, while the water about the yacht suddenly partook of the hue of blood.

"Hurrah!" shouted Professor Dionysius, triumphantly. "So much for the dynamite gun."

A cheer broke from the others, and the yacht was brought about. Then in a few moments she lay beside the mammoth cetacean, for such Professor Dionysius declared it to be.

"It is a mighty species of narwhal," he asserted after a diagnosis. "If it hadn't been for the effective work of the dynamite our yacht would surely have been destroyed by it."

Captain Adams, who had been upon whaling expeditions in northern seas, had never seen any whale half its size, he declared. Indeed, it was a wonder, but only a minor object of wonderment which our party of explorers were destined to yet encounter.

Bob and Dick got upon the dead cetacean, and with difficulty walked about on its slimy carcass. Its weight was many tons.

Of course Professor Dionysius made an extended survey of the monster, and made notes. After this was done, to please the scientist, the cetacean was left to float at will upon the ice-bound sea, and a return was made to the straits where the strange bird had been shot.

When the yacht arrived there it was found that the strait was broad enough to admit the yacht, and there was a wide

sea beyond. This was a surprise to Captain Adams, and gave him a thrill.

"What if it will take us into the outer seas?" he cried. "We cannot be any worse off. Let us take a sail through there at any rate."

All agreed to this, and after the professor had skinned the dead bird and preserved such of its bones as he desired the yacht was navigated into the sea beyond.

The long day was now coming to a close, and the yacht was laid upon a course as Captain Adams believed to the northward. It began to blow up so bitterly cold that the fur garments of our explorers were not adequate to admit of their going on deck.

Through the thick plate glass of the pilot-house the course was watched, but the sea seemed boundless, and soon they were out of sight of ice in any direction. Captain Adams had allowed himself the wild hope that they had broken through the Antarctic barrier, and were making a good nothing.

Darkness now came on. As the cold was certainly forty degrees it was not safe to venture on deck, so the hatches were closed, and our explorers passed the evening in the cabin with pleasant conversation and games, with the yacht hove to and all snug to ride out the night.

Besides Professor Dionysius, the captain and Bob and Dick, there were three men in the crew. It had not been deemed advisable to take a greater number, as the yacht could be worked well enough by these three.

One was the pilot, Jack McCarty, a genuine seaman, formerly in the United States Navy. Sam Smith worked the dynamos, and Dan Drake looked after the cabin and the culinary department.

They were all good men in their places. Yet, save, of course, the Pilot McCarty, Captain Adams had refrained from revealing the fact to them that the yacht was lost.

"They will find it out soon enough, poor fellows!" he mentally reflected. "Again, it might discourage them."

While the yacht's captain trusted these men implicitly, he was not blind to the fact that their sympathies were not so much in common with the undertaking as the others. They worked for pay, and it had been that alone which had induced them to come into the unknown latitudes. What would be their emotions if they should gain the idea that the yacht was lost and they were not likely to ever see home again; it would be difficult to say. Captain Adams prudently deferred telling them until it should become necessary.

Drake was a powerful man, with sandy beard and mustache. He was particularly a surly-tempered fellow, though a faithful cook. Captain Adams feared disaffection upon his part more than the others.

But, in spite of all precautions, in some way, probably through McCarty, the suspicion had reached Drake that the yacht was lost. It had a tremendous effect upon him, for he was counting the days until he should return to New York, where his interests were centered.

Being of an inflammable turn of mind, the matter had grown in Drake's mind until he was worked up to a high pitch. It reached culmination upon the present night, and it was while our friends were seated about a table in the cabin discussing plans for the day that he burst violently in.

"What does this mean?" he cried, angrily, banging his fist down upon the table. "Do you bring a man down into this forsaken clime to leave him here to die? Am I not to return to New York?"

Captain Adams sprang up, and his face flushed at the man's rudeness.

"Go back to your work, Drake," he said, sternly. "You are out of your place here."

"Am I?" exclaimed Drake, doggedly. "Well, I want to know the truth. Is this yacht lost or not?"

Captain Adams was a connoisseur in the management of his men. He paused an instant. It would not do to practise deception.

"We hope to find our way safely out of this sea," he declared, quietly.

But a frightful change came over Drake's face.

"My heavens! then we are lost!" he gasped. "And we have got to die down here among all this ice, blame you! Blame you, I say. For my life you are responsible."

It was an unpleasant turn of affairs. Captain Adams, and Bob and Dick as well, were pained to witness the man's utter despair and grief. But to share it at that moment would have been injudicious.

"You don't know what you are saying, Drake," exclaimed the captain, forcibly. "It is not for you to come here and make

such talk in the presence of your superiors. You do not know that the yacht is lost; and even if you did, it would not help matters any to get into such high dudgeon. Go back to your work."

"No, sir," cried Drake, obstinately. "Where my life is concerned I have a right to speak. I demand that the yacht be turned back for home. I ain't going any further."

The critical moment had come. The words had not left Drake's mouth fully when the cabin door was again pushed open and McCarty and Smith came in. They presented a more respectful attitude than Drake, and stood in the background with their hats removed. Captain Adams assumed an expression of astonishment, and gazed at them with a light in his fine gray eyes such as Bob and Dick had never seen there before.

"McCarty, what do you want here?" he asked in an authoritative way.

"Please, cap'n, I—that is," stammered the pilot. "Drake, he's our spokesman, sir."

"Why are you not at your post?"

"Savin' yer presence, sir, but the wheel is lashed an' the yacht rides easy an' free."

"I don't care for that," cried the captain, angrily. "I want you to go back to your post. Supposing we should strike an iceberg?"

But McCarty hesitated. This was enough for Captain Adams. He saw that prompt, decisive action was all that could be depended upon now. With an oath he threw off his pea-jacket and picked up a billet of wood from the floor. The crisis was truly at hand.

"Plame you for a set of pickaninnies!" he roared, wrathfully. "Don't you know that I'm the captain of this craft? My word is law, and to disobey it means mutiny. Now get back to your work, or I'll know the reason why."

McCarty and Smith seemed inclined to quit the cabin, but the choleric Drake stood his ground. It was plain that the yacht's company was divided, the crew against the officers, and as the former were three able-bodied men, the odds seemed in their favor.

"Avast there, cap'n," cried Drake. "We don't mean no disrespect, sir, but we have our rights and we must look out for them."

"Your rights are to obey your superior officer and ask no questions," thundered Captain Adams.

"With all due respect, sir, we don't believe it is safe to go any further in these latitudes. We are not mutineers, but we don't want to die in this terrible place."

Bob Singleton, who had until now remained silent, saw that the men were right enough in their convictions. Thinking to avoid a collision, he put a hand upon Captain Adams' arm and cried:

"Wait a moment, Mr. Adams. I don't want to interfere, but I don't think the men understand the question. Let me talk with them a moment."

"That's right!" cried the men in chorus; "let Master Bob talk. He is our friend."

"It is not mannerly in the crew to act so groggy toward their cap'n," growled Captain Adams, as he drew back. "The rope's end is too good for them."

"Now, my men, what is it you want?" asked Bob, coming forward frankly. "My father is the owner of this yacht, as you know, and it is in my charge. I pay you for your services, but if there is anything more that you want, let me know what it is."

"Oh, we don't find any fault with our pay, Master Bob," cried the men in chorus, "but we want to go home."

"To go home?" exclaimed Bob. "Why, did you not ship with us to go to the South Pole?"

There was a moment of silence.

"Yes," doggedly replied Drake, "but not to sail into any ice trap, out of which we will never go with our lives. But to make the thing short, Master Bob, I'll tell you what we want. We have talked the matter all over and concluded that it is not safe to go any further, and it is better to turn back while there is time."

"Why did you not make that statement before we sailed?" asked Bob, in surprise.

"We didn't know we was going to a place from which there ain't any return."

"That is rather an unreasonable argument. I can't see but that you are in for it and must stick to your posts," declared Bob, decisively. "The matter was all explained before we sailed, and now at a critical moment it does not become you to act in this way. I think I understand you now fully, and I

have only to say the yacht is my property for the present, and as its master I command you to go back to your duties. We are going to carry out the project for which we came here, and any interference upon your part will be punished as mutiny. Now leave the cabin."

After they had gone, pale faced and excited, the three explorers looked at each other.

"I tell you we shall have trouble with those rascals," declared Captain Adams. "A little discipline is what they need."

"Still, I cannot think that they would resort to any forcible measures," exclaimed Bob.

"You can't tell. That Drake is a high-tempered, ignorant fellow. The situation does look dubious, and to men of their stamp life is dearer than anything else. The thing could assume proportions enough to excite them to a desperate pitch."

The next day the affair was related to Professor Dionysius and a secret conference was held in the cabin. The men were all at their work as usual, though reticent and sullen. The yacht was kept on her course as near as the captain could set it, but toward night a tremendously heavy sea came on; great cakes of ice filled the water and clashed against the yacht's iron-clad sides, and it was not safe to remain upon deck a moment.

The situation was a most bleak and dreary one, which no doubt contributed much toward the capping of the climax. Yet no warning of impending peril had reached our friends, and the blow came with terrific suddenness when, as Captain Adams was about to emerge from his cabin, strong arms seized him and he was borne backward to the floor.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MUTINY—THE EXPLOSION.

Captain Adams was a strong man, but he was a child in that grasp. His assailants were too powerful for him, and he was held helpless and secure.

"Unhand me!" he cried, angrily. "Treachery! Help! This is mutiny, and you shall be punished for it! Let me up, I say!"

"Not yet, I reckon, cap'n!" exclaimed a voice which he recognized as that of McCarty. "We don't want to hurt ye, but great gunwales! we have got to fight for our lives, and this is our only way."

It was Drake who held the captain upon the floor, and McCarty was winding a stout cord about his wrists. In a twinkling he was securely bound and a captive.

The men had determined upon swift action, and no sooner was this done than they thrust the captain into the forward hold and locked the door, leaving him alone in pitchy darkness.

"Now, boys," shouted Drake, as he sprang toward the cabin occupied by Bob and Dick, "all together!"

Bob was studying an Antarctic chart upon a table in their cabin and Dick Morris was reading a book, when they heard the heavy tramp of feet. Bob started up with a sudden premonition, and Dick dropped his book.

"What is that?" ejaculated Bob.

Before further speech could be made the three mutineers burst into the cabin. The result was startling.

Bob and Dick both instantly guessed the truth, and for an instant were undecided how to act. But only for an instant. Then Bob sprang for his rifle, which hung in a rack by his berth.

"Back, you scoundrels!" he cried. "Here, Dick, stand your ground!"

"Aye, aye!" cried the fearless lad, springing to his chum's side.

The action of the two lads was so decisive and determined that for an instant the mutineers were checked. They stood hesitatingly upon the threshold. Bob knew the value of quick speech, and exclaimed:

"What does this mean? Why do you make fools of yourselves and endanger the safety of the yacht? Desist this moment and go back to your work as you value your lives!"

His commanding tones were not without effect, but there was an ugly expression upon Drake's face, and he slapped his hand upon his chest almost savagely as he cried:

"We have stood it just as long as we could. We are going to sail the yacht back to New York."

"Sail the yacht back to New York!" cried Bob, aghast.

"Why, you can no more do that than we."

"We shall see."

"That is why you have mutinied?"

"Yes."

"What do you propose to do with us?"

"Keep you safely locked up until we have reached home. We think that old fossil of a professor has turned your heads, and we take this measure to save our lives. It is useless for you to struggle, young gentlemen, for the captain is bound and locked up in the forward hold. We won't hurt you if you will surrender peaceably."

Bob and Dick exchanged glances, and their faces were very pale.

"You are mad!" exclaimed Bob, earnestly. "Listen to me, I pray you, before you commit any rash act. You cannot sail the yacht home. The compass is out of gear and you can set no course."

"We can try," persisted Drake. "If we fail, we shall hold you responsible for our lives."

"Then I warn you that I will shoot the first man that advances!" cried Bob, determinedly. "And I shall mark you especially, Dan Drake!"

A villainous yell broke from the rascally cook's lips.

"Charge 'em, messmates!" he cried savagely. "Put down that gun, you young puppy!"

Crack!

The bullet grazed Drake's shoulder and drew a maddened howl from his lips. In an instant the mutineers were upon the two brave boys. Such a struggle the yacht's cabin had never witnessed.

Had it been an even contest—that is, man to man—the boys might have won, but the third antagonist tipped the scale in the other direction.

Bob was the first to succumb and was bound with a piece of tarred rope. Of course Dick Morris followed, and the two boys were captives.

"I have an idea," cried Drake.

"What is it?" asked McCarty.

"Let us put them in the forward cabin and batten the door."

It chanced that Dionysius had heard the fracas in his laboratory and had hastened into the boys' cabin to find out what was the trouble.

As he appeared he was quickly overpowered.

Between them the poor professor, making useless protests, was carried forward to the door of the forward cabin. He was thrust through this, and the boys and Captain Adams followed him. Then the mutineers closed and spiked the heavy door, leaving them in their prison.

Their bonds had been cut through and they could grasp each other's hands and confer together upon some plan of release from the place.

But all plans to get out of the cabin failed.

At necessary intervals a hatch opened above them and food was given them. Their captors vouchsafed no information, but the motion of the yacht taught them that it was sailing fast.

It was a dreadful outlook. The unfortunate prisoners found much to blame themselves for, but did not lose hope. The professor was busy inventing some method for making an escape from the cabin, but this far was unsuccessful.

Thus three days passed. Their confinement was growing dreadfully irksome. All this while the yacht had been running to the best of her ability.

But early the morning of the fourth day she lay still and rocking, as it seemed, to those in the cabin, in a ground swell.

More than this, excited cries, seeming dull and unintelligible through the thick walls, came to their hearing. There was certainly a change in the yacht's course. Something was up.

"Something going on up there," declared Bob Singleton. "I would give much to know."

The words had scarcely left his lips when a terrific explosion rent the air. Our friends in the cabin were prostrated with the dreadful shock, and it was some moments before any could rise.

"My soul!" cried Bob Singleton, as he regained his feet. "What was that?"

White-faced Dick Morris was beside him, but the explanation came spasmodically from Professor Dionysius.

"Soul of Plato!" he roared. "The hounds have got into my laboratory. I left a dynamite shell half completed on the bench, and they have blown up the yacht."

Consternation filled the breasts of all after this revelation. An avenue of escape now offered itself. A part of the partition had been blown out by the explosion, and they set to work with feverish earnestness to enlarge this.

They had only a pocket-knife with which to work, and it required a great deal of time to cut a sufficiently large hole through the partition, but it was finally accomplished, and they crawled through.

A thrilling scene was presented to them. The partition in the main cabin was blown out, and the professor's laboratory was wrecked, but it was seen that no material damage was done the yacht, so far as its staunchness or sailing apparatus was concerned.

All sprang to the engine-room, but it was deserted. Realizing the peril, Bob shut off the lever and brought the yacht to a stop. The next move was to rush on deck. So far not one of the mutineers had been seen.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAND OF THE SOUTH POLE.

Every corner of the yacht had been subjected to the closest search, but not a trace of the three men could be found.

"I can only form one conclusion," exclaimed Captain Adams, with a laugh. "There must have been some powerful qualities in that dynamite of yours, Dionysius. It surely has dispelled the mutineers into something as invisible and impalpable as air."

Captain Adams changed the yacht's course a couple of points, as near as he could judge to the northward, and the professor assumed charge of the dynamos. As they would now be obliged to perform the duties of the crew themselves, the remaining positions of pilot and cook were taken by our boys Dick and Bob.

The explosion had blown up a part of the deck, which at odd times they set about repairing. When this job was finished three days of aimless cruising about had been consumed.

Another day passed. The yacht kept on the same aimless course, seeming to cleave an unknown, limitless sea, only occasionally encountering an iceberg. Captain Adams clung to the wild hope that they were making a steady northing and would eventually come out in the clear South Atlantic.

All were upon deck as much as possible now, and scanning the hazy horizon intently for some sign of land. Icebergs were seldom met and they seemed in a melting state and drifting in the same direction as the yacht's course.

"We are surely making a northing," cried Captain Adams exultingly. "And we shall soon be in safe waters, boys. Only one thing puzzles me, and that is the derangement of our compass."

The words had hardly left his lips when a cry came from Dick Morris, who was at the wheel. Instantly all started for the pilot-house.

When they arrived there they saw the young pilot sitting upon a stool and staring at the compass. It required only a glance for Captain Adams to perceive the truth.

Great guns!" he exclaimed. "The needle obeys its pole. The strange current is overcome. Hurrah!"

"Yes," exclaimed Dick Morris huskily and with pallid face. "But observe the yacht's course now."

Captain Adams did so, and almost screamed:

"My soul! it is due south."

All in the little party faced each other in the pilot-house, mute and ashen visaged. Professor Dionysius was the coolest, and finally exclaimed:

"Give us our reckoning, captain. Let us know where we are."

Captain Adams needed no second advice. He went to work at once upon the yacht's reckoning. It was the next morning before he had it properly figured out. Then he tottered out from the cabin and said:

"We may safely reckon that we shall never see home again. The yacht is at this moment upon the ninety-second parallel of south latitude. We have reached the South Pole on its contiguous territory, but it rests with Heaven whether we shall ever see our homes again."

"Then we have been progressing southward all the while?" asked Professor Dionysius.

"Yes."

"But how shall we explain the very material change in temperature within a few days?" asked Bob Singleton. "Should we not look for greater coldness the further south we go?"

"I think I can explain that," exclaimed Professor Dionysius, rubbing his hands briskly. "You will remember that since we came into this sea we have not seen the sun. But it has not been obscured by haze or clouds. To be sure it has been as light as any ordinary day, but this we owe to the refraction of its rays, as it passes around the earth. In fact, all this while the sun has not risen in our sky."

All looked astonishing at this declaration. Then a sudden recollection came to both Bob and Dick.

"You mean to say that we have been experiencing the same

phenomena of a three months' night, such as is witnessed at the North Pole?"

"It is not exactly similar," replied the professor. "In this instance we do not have any season of perpetual darkness, although we do not have any sun. For the last three nights have you not observed the wonderful display of aurora borealis or polar lights?"

"Yes," replied the boys breathlessly.

"They were especially fine last night. Now I think I can explain why the temperature is so rapidly falling. The sun is nearing us, and by my estimate, for I have carefully kept record of time and signs, we shall see it rise above the horizon next Tuesday at 11 A. M."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the boys. "How can you know so much, professor? Shall we have our regular days and nights then?"

"No," answered the professor. "For the first two days the sun will not set, and you will witness the extraordinary spectacle of almost a complete circle of the horizon. That means a day of forty-eight hours."

All were intensely interested in the professor's declarations. Now that the first shock of the terrible discovery that they were in the most remote part of the Antarctic Ocean, instead of making the warmer waters of the South Atlantic, was over, there succeeded a certain sense of triumph and novelty in the thought that they had accomplished the greatest feat ever credited to man; they had reached the South Pole.

Bob and Dick came out of their stupor, and with something like old-time enthusiasm doffed their caps and gave three rousing cheers.

The cheers were right royally given and then they tumbled upon deck. It was a relief to get off the heavy, cumbersome furs and circulate around in a regulation ulster. The temperature was constantly rising until it was scarcely five below. No doubt this in New York would seem frigid enough, but our explorers had learned to regard the weather as absolutely mild at anything under 20 degrees below zero.

The Eclipse was making a good swift headway in a comparatively calm sea. There was a dim haze on the horizon line, which might have been taken for a coast line in any other waters. It now occurred to the explorers that they must soon encounter some part of that Antarctic continent which was known to exist in those latitudes.

Consequently they were eagerly upon the watch, and Captain Adams laid a new course, which he believed would enable them to sight it.

The professor was extremely busy studying astronomical signs, and was gathering funds of rare information, which he declared would create a sensation if they were ever lucky enough to return safely home to the United States. If—it seemed a most uncertain, intangible word at that moment. Yet our boys would not abandon hope.

"Is it not about time that we should see something of that land and the peculiar people of which Ben Blunt told?" asked Dick Morris, impatiently. "Or did that wonderful yarn exist only in his fertile imagination?"

"Have patience," exclaimed Captain Adams. "We are several hundred miles to the east of the longitude given by Ben Blunt. Perhaps by making a good westerly course we may find a verification of his story. Wait a while."

The words had barely left the captain's lips when a cry came from Bob Singleton, who had been forward with a glass. It had a startling effect upon all.

"Land ho!"

The manner in which they left their various duties and rushed to the rail where Bob stood, trembling with excitement, would have made a horse laugh.

"Where away? Where?" gasped Captain Adams, seizing the glass handed him by Bob.

Bob pointed to the eastward. The haze was lifting and now to the naked eye was certainly visible a long coast line, which seemed devoid of ice.

The yacht's course was changed to head directly for the coast, and a half hour later they were cruising in the ground swell not two miles from black, forbidding cliffs of what appeared to be granite.

Soundings were made, and at length a small cove was found deep enough to float the Eclipse and admirably protected by headlands. Here the anchor was dropped.

Lots were drawn to decide who should be the fortunate ones to go ashore, and it fell to the lot of Captain Adams to remain aboard the yacht.

A few moments later, with Bob and Dick at the oars and

the professor at the rudder, the yacht's boat entered the breakers and was carried far up on the shore of the unexplored Antarctic land.

CHAPTER VIII.

A TOUR OF EXPLORATION.

Bob Singleton was the first to leap out and place his foot upon the new continent. The professor was next, and Dick dragged the boat's anchor up to a cleft in the rocks. Making sure that it could not break away, he hastened to rejoin his companions, who were rapidly making their way up the cliff.

The cliffs were in some places at least one hundred feet in height, and it was with difficulty that the boys found a means of ascent.

A path was finally found, and they clambered laboriously up it until at length Bob in advance leaped upon the highest rock and gazed at a wonderful scene spread before him.

A white-capped mountain range, seeming to become lost in the clouds, obscured the horizon. There were drifts of snow and ice beyond the cliffs, alternating with patches of bare ground—proof that the Antarctic winter was breaking up. As the wind was boisterous on the cliffs, the party descended to the lower land of the interior a half mile or so.

Now evidences of scanty vegetation were encountered; hardy shrubs, like birch and alder, also a prickly kind of pine tree not unlike a cactus, only, of course, more hardy. Beneath the snow were most beautiful stores of genuine Arctic moss, the food of the musk ox and reindeer of Labrador.

And, before they had gone far, Bob discovered footprints in the snow similar to those of a reindeer, also marks of the animal's nose, where the snow had been pushed aside in order to get at the moss. This was certain proof of the existence of animal life.

Thus in high spirits they kept on until an eminence was reached. It was believed that beyond this a good view of the farther interior could be had. Accordingly they set about climbing it.

They had now traveled over three miles and the higher land about hid from them any view of the sea. A warm wind was blowing and the boys had even removed their overcoats. It required an hour's hard climbing for them to overcome the ascent, but they finally accomplished it and were well repaid.

A most wonderful scene was spread before their eyes. Miles below their elevation in a beautiful lake studded valley hundreds of miles in circumference was a tract of luxuriantly vegetated country.

It was out of the question to think of exploring the place that night, as it was nearing the hour for retiring, though it was but a shade darker than it had been at noonday.

Bob arose finally from his seat upon a crag and exclaimed: "To-morrow we will know what that valley contains. For the present our best course is to return to the yacht. I have no doubt Captain Adams is very much alarmed about us."

Taking a last look at the "Valley of Eden," as Dick had already christened it, they started back for the yacht.

On they hurried, until the professor began to wheeze so badly that they were obliged to moderate their pace. Half the distance had been covered when they met the bear. Now only a few hundred yards intervened to the cliffs, when they were brought to a halt by a most thrilling and terrifying sight.

Thus far, though many strange animals had been encountered, nothing had been seen of the strange aborigines described by Ben Blunt. Yet if the old tar's wonderful story was to be credited, such must exist, and though they were not exactly surprised, yet our explorers were alarmed to note the sudden appearance above a near eminence of a gigantic framed man.

It was certainly a human being, though clothed in the skins of wild animals. In keeping with the giant growth of animal life in the region was this nomad, and he formed a strange, picturesque spectacle to our friends. His arms and neck were partly bared, and his hair fell in a straggling, unkempt mass down upon his shoulders. His skin was dark, even mulatto-like. In his hand he carried a spear with a sharp point, evidently of fish bone or flint. He was plainly a barbarian of the most pronounced type.

"My heavens!" gasped Bob Singleton. "At last we are face to face with the people of the South Pole!"

The words had barely left his ashen lips when others of the aborigines appeared, and with strange wild cries started toward the unknown invaders of their prehistoric land.

Fresh to Bob Singleton's memory was the assertion of Ben

Blunt that the inhabitants of the Antarctic continent were divided into two species or tribes, one white, the other dark. These were undoubtedly the dark-skinned dwellers of the warm valley which the old tar had mentioned, or the Moodas tribe.

Blunt had described the Moodas as a savage, warlike tribe, and it did not require any further warning to place the young owner of the Eclipse upon his guard. Yet he knew that it would not be policy to assume the aggressive, so he seized Dick Morris' arm just as he was about to aim at the oncoming foe.

"Not for your life!" cried Bob, excitedly. "You must not shoot, Dick. It would be the most fatal move we could make."

Reluctantly, Dick lowered his rifle, while Bob stepped forward and held up his arms as a sign of peace. The Moodas seemed to disregard this offering of truce, and with javelins uplifted came rushing down upon the three explorers. Half a dozen in number they were, and such giants that they would seem able to overpower our friends quickly enough. In vain Bob waved his arms and gesticulated. It did not check them.

Yet not until several of the javelins had been thrown, one nearly transfixing the professor, and the murderous intent of the savages became certain, did Bob give the word to fire.

The two rifles cracked together, and two of the savages fell in a heap. The crash of the guns and the smoke, as well as the sudden fall of their companions, brought the rest of the savages to a halt. It was the needful thing, and with wild cries of alarm they retreated again to the eminence.

The boys were glad to see the other two crawl after them, and that they were not killed.

They had nearly gained the cliff, when it became certain that the Moodas were coming on in a fresh attack. With hoarse cries they came plunging down the slope, and this time the boys saw with increased terror that there were more of them. Fully fifty of the dark-skinned barbarians were rushing vengefully upon our luckless little party.

The barbarians came down with a rush until quite close upon the boys, when they slackened their gait and began to approach more cautiously. It was plain that their superstitious natures were somewhat impressed, and they dreaded another volley from the rifles, which must have seemed to them very strange kind of weapons.

They even halted a dozen yards distant and swarmed about our friends. What a moment that was for Bob and Dick. They never forgot it.

The savage homads of the wild Antarctic country rushed about our friends like a pack of hungry wolves. What prodigious men they were, and what savage features, the boys thought. Surely man in his primitive state could not have been wilder than these. They were evidently cowards as well as brutes, for they did not approach nearer, but began making fierce motions and cat-calls, none of which caused our boys to waver.

Suddenly a rifle shot sounded and our friends perceived Captain Adams coming to their rescue. The savages retreated as Adams came up.

"Thank heaven that I was able to come to your aid," replied the captain, fervently. "I was fearful that harm had befallen you, and was about to set out to look for you when I heard your gun. So those are the savages Ben Blunt told us about. Humph! They are not equal to our American Indians—not much intelligence there."

"These are the savage Moodas he told us of," corrected Bob. "You are thinking of the ignoos, I guess. In the main, Blunt's story has shown but few discrepancies."

"But the kingdom of ice——"

"I have no doubt we shall find it. Now let us back to the yacht."

"Right!" cried Captain Adams. "Those dirty niggers may see fit to attack us again. Heavens above! Look at that!"

A wild, startled cry pealed from the lips of Bob Singleton as his gaze followed the direction indicated by Adams.

Others of the savage tribe had appeared above a crest near, and it was yet a more thrilling sight which caused the pulses of our explorers to quicken. Foremost among the crew of barbarians were three white men.

Need it be said that these were the mutineers—McCarty, Smith and Drake? It was an astounding revelation to our friends.

A loud laugh broke from Drake's lips as he shouted down to them:

"Now we've got yer. Make a move to escape and we'll set the whole tribe after yer."

"I warn you that I shall fire at you as a special target if you attack us."

A frightful yell was the villain's reply, and then the horde set out down the slope incited by his adjurations. But the firing kept them in confusion, which enabled the explorers to descend the cliffs to the boat.

Just in time they shoved off and rowed out to the yacht. They were now safe and yielded a deaf ear to the loud threats of their foes upon the shore. It was decided to weigh anchor and leave the spot at once, and Adams was about to do this, when McCarty, of the mutineers, ran out upon a point of land out of earshot of his companions and begged piteously to be taken aboard.

"I ain't one of the set, messmates," he pleaded. "Dash my davy if I am! In course I had to jibe with 'em or swing."

"One question," said Bob. "Why did you leave the yacht, Jack?"

"We didn't leave it, boss. Ther dasted sharks boarded us while we was in a bay, an' when we were below deck, and made us all prisoners. Then they took us ashore. Some one on 'em got killed playin' with the dynamite in the professor's cabin, and they brought his carcass ashore."

The mystery was explained at last. The natives had probably yielded to a foible after they had got their captives ashore, and made them chiefs, probably upon the consideration that they remain with them. Yet they were by no means assured of positive or lasting security, for the fickle nomads might take another whimsical streak and want their lives.

While all felt sorry for McCarty, who might not have been as bad at heart as Drake and Smith, they could not agree to show him any preference. In consideration of personal safety, and the treachery, not to say murderous proclivities, of the trio, it was decided the wisest course to leave them to their fate. So the Eclipse's anchor was weighed and the engines were set in motion.

The yacht rounded to, and was about to leave the bay, when a fearful loud yell went up from the shore, and then, to the horror of his friends, Bob Singleton threw up his arms, and with a wild cry fell to the deck, smitten by a strange and deadly missile.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ICE CITY.

The wounded boy lay limp and passive upon the deck. The missile had hurtled across the deck, and was picked up by Dick Morris.

It was a rounded bit of ore—exactly what sort Dick could not at the moment tell—around which was a noose of hide. Swung around his head several times with the force of his powerful arm, one of the savages could throw such a slung-shot a great ways and with terrific force. It had struck Bob just over the ear, and rendered him instantly senseless.

Captain Adams lifted his head and Dick rushed for water. This was dashed in Bob's face, and had the effect of bringing him to with a convulsive gasp.

Fortunately the slung-shot had not inflicted a fatal wound, and beyond a severe contusion on the scalp and the stunning effect he was all right. But his head rang like a bell for some while, and he sat up dizzy and confused.

"Egad!" he ejaculated. "I don't want another whack like that. What was it and where did it come from?"

Now that it was evident that Bob was beyond danger, the spirits of all arose, and Dick came forward with the missile.

The professor took the slung-shot from his hands and examined it critically. An exclamation escaped his lips, and picking up an iron bolt from the deck he broke the piece of ore in fragments.

"It is gold!"

The effect of this upon the voyagers was electrical. The instant impulse of all was to at once start upon a prospecting tour, but the instant recollection of the enemy returned and dispelled the desire at once.

While this had been going on the Moodas had not been idle, and had thrown other missiles of a like character at the yacht, some falling into the water about, others striking on the deck.

And in a short space of time our explorers had enough gold ore aboard to have purchased another Eclipse in New York.

It was found necessary to attend to the course of the yacht, which had drifted so closely inland that the Moodas found it quite easy to take aim at those on deck with their primitive weapons.

Dick sprang to the wheel and the professor to the dynamos, and the yacht was started seaward. In a few minutes she

had cleared the bay, and soon the savage tribe with the three treacherous mutineers was left behind in the invisible distance.

The Eclipse's course was now set due north and along the coast of the Antarctic continent.

On the morning of the ninth day after leaving the valley of the South Pole they came off a large headland, fully ten miles long, and which jutted out into the black waters, a mighty area of the Antarctic continent.

Rounding this headland, Dick Morris, who had been intently scanning the sea with his glass, gave a great cry.

"A canoe!" he cried wildly. "Just to windward. Hurrah! We have found the kingdom of ice."

The latter exclamation was caused, as they rounded the headland, by the view of a veritable city of ice, visible beyond a placid bay. High up from the shores of the bay rose dwellings and large buildings of glistening ice. A more wonderful or seemingly fabulous sight the human mind could not conceive. Yet they must believe their eyesight. There it rose before them, a picture of unspeakable beauty—a city of ice.

But no smoke arose from this beautiful city of the Antarctic. This made the truth apparent, that fire was unknown to its residents. Animal warmth was all they could obtain or depend upon. Yet, inured from birth to the frigidity of the atmosphere, it could be readily understood how they endured the cold.

For some while, open-mouthed and silent, our explorers stood upon the yacht's deck and scrutinized the ice city.

Then Dick Morris, chancing to turn his head, bethought himself of the canoe he had seen, and which was not far from them.

Springing to the rail he brought his glass to bear upon it, and saw at once that it was a species of coracle, made of the skins of the seal or wild beast stretched upon a wooden frame. It held a single occupant, who was clad in the softest of furs and whose features could not be distinguished at that distance.

The yacht was veered a trifle in its course so as to approach the coracle, and as it came abait the light craft its occupant was seen to fall upon his knees in an attitude of terror and supplication.

The engines of the Eclipse were checked, and then Bob Singleton sprang to the rail, and, making a trumpet of his hands, cried:

"Ahoy, there!"

The occupant of the coracle, seeing a man on the deck of the electrical yacht, and evidently reassured by the certainty that it was not some dreaded marine monster bearing down upon him, arose in the coracle and stared in sheer amazement at Bob.

Again the young master of the Eclipse shouted:

"Ahoy, there! Who are you?"

CHAPTER X.

WITH THE IGNOOS.

The man seemed to guess the meaning of the hail, for he made several enigmatical passes with his arms, which caused Bob to suddenly remember himself.

"Stupid! I might have known better," he muttered. "Of course he can't understand me. Say, Adams, lower the gig and we will bring him aboard."

Captain Adams, assisted by Dick, was prompt to obey, and soon the yacht's boat was being propelled by him and Dick toward the coracle.

At first the occupant of the primitive craft seemed disposed to fly, but cries and gestures from Bob reassured him, and he sat quite still finally and allowed the gig to come up to him.

As Dick and Captain Adams came alongside the coracle, he made several exclamations in an unintelligible but rich tongue. Dick made finger talk with him, and at length made him understand that he was not to be harmed, and induced him to propel his light craft to the side of the Eclipse, when he was taken on deck.

Making friendly talk with him by means of gestures, our friends now proceeded to show him through the yacht. Into the pilot-house they went, and the mechanism of the craft was explained as well as possible to him. Constant exclamations of surprise escaped his lips, and it was only when he touched an electric coil connected with one of the dynamos that he betrayed terror.

The electrical shock startled him, but he quickly recovered and laughed well, though he was mystified as to the nature and origin of the electrical current.

Quite two hours were spent in this manner, and the Ignoos native had become quite friendly and confident with his new acquaintances, and they had returned to the deck, when a surprising state of affairs was revealed.

The yacht, which had been hove to all this time, was surrounded by scores of the coracles, in each of which was a native hurling bone-tipped spears at the iron sides of the Eclipse, plainly believing it a submarine monster. At the sight, Kedo—which was the name the native expressed in his tongue—fell into an uncontrollable fit of merry laughter.

At sight of him emerging from the cabin with the explorers the astonished natives forebore the spear throwing, whereupon Kedo rushed to the rail and addressed them in quite a lengthy and eloquent speech.

The result was that in less time than it takes to tell it the coracles were clustered about the yacht's sides like barnacles, and a hundred of the Ignoos were upon her deck.

Kedo by signs and words protested to the explorers that no harm should be done, and that their intentions were friendly.

It required some time to arrive at a good understanding with the Ignoos. Then a patriarchal old man, much like the one described by Blunt, came off in one of the boats and inspected the yacht. As nearly as Bob could make out from the sign talk of Kedo, he was the Ignoos king, and was given the name of King Barak.

The monarch bowed low before the explorers, and in his tongue, of course not intelligible to them, bid the strangers welcome to his realm. This reassured the voyagers and raised their spirits.

It was not until the next day that our friends ventured to go ashore.

A fete had been prepared for them by King Barak, and the entire Ignoos nation were in attendance. A repast was served in the great banquet hall in the monarch's ice palace, and the boys worried through several slices of raw meat in order to "do as the Romans do."

To the surprise of our explorers, the ice houses were quite comfortable, couches and carpets of skins adorning them, and the atmosphere within was mild and dry—none of the dampness, as might be supposed, of our ice closets at home.

The Eclipse was brought into the harbor of the ice city and anchored, our explorers being meanwhile occupied in gratifying intercourse with the Ignoos, and spent most of their time ashore.

It would be impossible to enumerate the sledge rides they took, the wonderful fetes given them, and the displays of electrical wonders which they made in return, though the Ignoos chiefs could not fathom the mystery of the electrical current, and ascribed it in a superstitious way to some connection with the supernatural world and beyond their ken.

The boys finally abandoned the attempt to enlighten them, though they readily gained a comprehension of the use of fire, and the greatest boon they could confer upon King Barak was a bunch of lucifer matches.

The Ignoos listened with wonder to the story of another world beyond the ice floes, where mighty nations held sway, for before a week had gone the boys had got a sufficient smattering of the Ignoos tongue to be able to talk quite well with them.

They had been now nearly eleven months in the Antarctic seas, and there seemed little probability or even possibility of gaining an outlet into the northern seas before another eleven months. The meat supply as well as the water on board the Eclipse was short, so it was decided to remain with the Ignoos for a few months.

This would enable them to go upon several hunting tours, also it would give Professor Hamilton a good opportunity to study the peculiarities and characteristics of the Antarctic race in the interests of science.

The country was known to abound with strange and wonderful animals, and so it happened that when Kedo came to them one day with the proposition to go upon a hunting trip, it met with the acclamations of all.

The guns were brought out and loaded, and preparations made for what promised to be an enjoyable excursion, but which was meant by fate to entail thrilling experiences and a new and deadly danger.

CHAPTER XI.

A GREAT HUNT—THE ENEMY.

There was no small degree of excitement over the preparations for the hunting trip.

The Ignoos were all inclined to accompany the explorers in

a body, but as this would be most inconvenient to them, and the game as well. King Barak was obliged to issue a special edict to make them stay at home.

It was decided to make a party of sixteen, of which Kedo was to be the leader. So they started.

Mighty forests of pine filled the valleys, and great glaciers and crevasses were the deadly dangers of the hills. But the depths of the forests was where the game was to be found, and our hunters finally came to a halt where it became plain that they could proceed no further with the "albos" or reindeers.

The sledges were all huddled together and the reindeers turned loose to find what sustenance they could beneath the snow. Soon they were rooting around in the white element searching for the moss beneath.

This accomplished, our hunting party with their weapons held a brief consultation, and then separated into four parties, each going in a different direction.

One of the parties, under the guidance of Kedo, comprised our four adventurers, the professor, the boys and Captain Adams. They took a direction, skirting the great forest, and as near as Captain Adams could judge, to the southward. Tramping along over the snow for some time without incident, Bob suddenly discovered some singular-looking footprints.

"A bear!" cried Captain Adams as he looked at them. But Kedo shook his head, as the boys looked questioningly at him. "Aboko!" he cried.

It required some further explanation for our friends to understand that "Aboko" was the Ignoos name for an Antarctic wolf. Kedo exhibited his mantle, the beautiful fur of which he claimed came from the back of an "Aboko."

Considerable game was shot, when suddenly a sound came to their ears like a faint whistle.

"Something is wrong!" cried Kedo, his face changing in expression. "If danger came they were to whistle; otherwise shout. We must go back."

On they rushed at a rapid run over the snow until half the distance had been covered.

Then the whistle was heard again quite close, and a figure was visible coming toward them. It was one of the Antarctic hunters, and as he came up breathless and excited, he cried:

"For your life, hasten. There is a terrible peril about to overtake us."

"What is it?" breathlessly asked the others in one voice.

"Three of our hunters have been killed, and there is great danger that we shall not be able to reach the spot where we left our reindeers and sledges in time."

"Three men killed!" exclaimed Bob in horror, and then the question came:

"What killed them?"

"A band of the Moodas!"

"The Moodas!" gasped Kedo. "Oh, then, may Great Koro help us, friends! How many were in the band, my man?"

"Fully a score. We saw the fight from afar. I think that there are more in the hills, and that an army are coming to attack our city."

"Then we must return home at once," cried Kedo, excitedly. "King Barak must know of it. Come, let us lose no time. For the reindeers quickly."

In view of this desperate situation no time was wasted or precaution neglected. They skirted the thick woods, and after an hour's anxious work they came joyfully upon the sledges all safe.

The way in which the reindeers were harnessed into the sledges was a caution, Bob and Dick lending their best efforts. Soon they were all in readiness.

But now an unlooked-for calamity began to make its appearance.

The sky had darkened and a cloud of fine feathery flakes of snow was rapidly beginning to fill the air. Unless the city could be reached before this Antarctic blizzard had actually set in it would be a difficult matter to reach it at all.

"All ready," sang out Kedo, and all tumbled into the sledges. This time Bob and Dick became separated and Bob was alone with Kedo.

Heavens, how the Ignoos hunter made the lithe-limbed steed of the Antarctic fly over the snow and through the storm and darkness. On and on they sped.

Bob had no way of knowing whether his friends were behind him with the others and were safe or not. He looked back to distinguish the other sledges in vain. The driving snow covered all like a veil.

"Are you quite sure that you know the way back?" he asked Kedo.

The Ignoos driver replied in a guttural tone and once more lashed the "albo" with the stout rawhide whip in his hand. Swifter they sped into the darkness. It seemed an age, when Kedo suddenly started up with a cry of joy.

"All right!" he cried. "We are home all safe. There is the water. Hurrah!"

Of course all this was in his own tongue, but Bob had smattering enough of it to understand him. A few moments later the sledge had entered the streets of the ice city and was before the door of the house in which the Eclipse's company found quarters.

Benumbed with the cold, Bob clambered out. But he had only one thought and that was as to the fate of his companions. He was deeply alarmed.

"We should not have left them!" he cried, excitedly. "I would rather have stuck by them even if we had all perished."

But Kedo shook his head and muttered something in an unintelligible manner, though his face could be seen to be as white as chalk.

In spite of the lateness of the hour, the news spread through the town that a portion of the hunting party had returned home, and a crowd surrounded the dwelling in which Bob found shelter. Had he been left to follow his own inclination he would have immediately set out upon the quest for his friends.

The dreadful thought as to the certainty of his fate in that wild country, if his friends should come to death in the storm, was forced upon him, and nearly drove him mad.

"Oh, my heavens!" he cried, in anguish. "Something must be done, and immediately. They must not be left to perish in this terrible storm."

The words had barely escaped his lips, though, when there was a loud shout without, and then Captain Adams and Professor Hamilton, with others, burst into the ice dwelling.

They were half paralyzed with the cold, but in reply to Bob, who frantically called for Dick Morris, they said:

"We do not know whether he is alive or not, but his companions are dead."

CHAPTER XII.

MAKING READY FOR THE BATTLE.

A terrible shriek escaped Bob's lips.

"No—no!" he cried, wildly. "Dick is not dead. I won't have it so. Why did I leave him? What a fool I have been! Oh, if Dick has come to harm, I shall never forgive myself."

With an effort the young master of the Eclipse calmed himself, and then seating himself upon a cochu of skins, asked:

"Tell me all about this affair. You say Dick's companions were killed?"

"Yes," replied Captain Adams with a shudder, "we were behind you—in fact, the last of the sledges to leave. We lost our way and wandered on in the storm until suddenly we came upon an overturned sledge and the 'albo' lying beside it dead."

"It was Dick's sledge?"

"Yes."

"Go on."

"In the snow, quite dead, we found Dick's three companions. It was a sad sight. But no trace was there of Dick."

"But—he could not have survived. What killed them? The cold or the shock of being overturned?"

"Neither. They were all badly beaten about the head and body, and the snow was covered with blood. The Moodas were their murderers."

Bob gave a gasp of horror.

"Then they have likely carried Dick with them as a prisoner," he declared. "Oh, we must rescue him, if they do not or have not already killed him."

"I have reason to believe that they will not kill him," said Captain Adams. "I think the mutineers, who are of course at the bottom of all this, have a different object in view. We shall see in course of time. At least, nothing is to be gained by useless worryment."

With the clearing up of the darkness all became activity in the Ignoos city. Fortifications of blocks of ice had been built around the upper part of the town, and these were now manned with men armed to the extent of the Ignoos arsenals, which only furnished an ineffective sort of spears, bone daggers and battle clubs.

With these weapons nothing but a hand-to-hand conflict could be waged, and in this the Moodas were, of course, superior, being heavier and stronger men.

But Bob Singleton was cool and collected, and he and Captain Adams held a conference as to what could be done to defend the city.

"I am averse to taking human life," declared Bob. "But we are acting in self-defense, and these fellows are the worst of barbarians. They will murder these inoffensive and intelligent Ignoos. I believe we are doing right."

"Certainly," affirmed both the captain and Professor Hamilton. "It can be no crime to defend the innocent and the right-minded, which these people certainly are."

"Enough!" cried Bob. "Now let us make some plan for the defense of the city. There are two brass cannon on board the Eclipse. We could bring them up here and mount them on the ice ramparts."

"I have a better plan," put in the professor at this moment.

"What is it?"

"It is a very simple thing. We must bring the Eclipse as close to the shore as possible."

"Yes."

"Then we will lay a wire, non-insulated, from the dynamos, along the city wall. This wire shall be so arranged that in climbing the walls the assailants must come in contact with it."

Bob and Captain Adams saw through the plan instantly. It was a most effective one.

There were miles of wire stowed away in the hold of the Eclipse, and this was brought up and a line run ashore.

Then the task of encircling the city began. It involved not a little hard work, as our adventurers were obliged to do almost the entire amount of work alone.

But it was accomplished at length and a return current effected. The effectiveness of the dynamos was tried upon a condemned "albo," which it killed instantly.

Meanwhile, reports of the advance of the Moodas had been coming in thick and fast, and soon, with the aid of the yacht's glass, Bob from one of the ice towers saw a dark line not two miles distant across the snow plain, which he knew to be the enemy.

From all the small hamlets and abodes about the Ignoos came flocking into the ice city.

Professor Hamilton proved an indispensable ally in the preparations for the battle.

He had arranged and connected with the line of wire several electric lamps, which would prevent any sudden surprise attack in case of darkness.

"It will also serve to blind the mutineers as to the real purpose of the wire," he declared. "Oh, we shall be able to give them a warm reception, I think."

Thus the preparations were made for the attack. Both Bob and Captain Adams, armed with good rifles and plenty of ammunition, took up their positions behind the ramparts, while the professor retreated to the yacht to manage the dynamos.

In case that the Moodas, by any means, should overcome the defendants and break through the line of defense, it was arranged that our friends could retreat to the Eclipse and then make their escape good; though Bob declared that he would lay down his life before he would see the Ignoos butchered by their barbarian foes.

Straight down in a body they came until within hailing distance.

Then their lines divided and they branched to the right and left, meaning no doubt to surround the town. It was plain that they were confident of an easy conquest, as the Ignoos were known to be poor fighters.

But Bob Singleton smiled as he thought of the reception in store for them.

At this juncture, and when a few hundred yards from the ramparts, the whole army of Moodas halted, and then three white men, no other than the mutineers, stepped out into view.

Drake was plainly distinguishable to Bob and Captain Adams as he made a trumpet of his hands and shouted:

"Ahoy, Eclipse! We know you're there. Come out and show yourself."

"That is not our plan, Sam Drake," cried Bob in reply. "We shall resist any attack, though, I warn you."

"It will be a poor resistance," retorted the villain. "Why, we have got men enough to gobble up three such tribes as yours."

"That remains to be seen."

"We will give you one chance."

"You will?"

"Yes."

"How very kind," retorted Bob. "Pray what may it be?"

"Come out and surrender."

A derisive laugh broke from Bob's lips.

"Do you think we are fools?" he shouted back in reply. "We shall never surrender, Sam Drake, and we warn you to go."

"back to the place you came from or you will merit the death of a traitor."

"I will have your heart's blood, you young puppy," yelled the ruffian, in a frenzy of rage. "I have got your partner in my clutches now, and I mean to make him an example before I get through with him."

A glad cry broke from Bob Singleton's lips, and he shouted ecstatically:

"Then Dick is alive. Heaven be praised. Give him up, you scoundrel, or it will be the worse for you. Harm a hair of his head at your peril."

"Give him up!" yelled Drake, derisively. "I'll send you his hide after I have flayed him alive. Oh, no, he cannot escape my vengeance this time, you bet."

CHAPTER XIII.

DICK MORRIS' ADVENTURES.

The brutal taunt of Drake, however, was a villainous fabrication, as events which we shall now proceed to chronicle will show.

Dick Morris was far from being a captive in the villain's power. To be sure he had been captured by the Moodas that night of the storm, but Providence had enabled him to make an escape and become the participant in a series of thrilling adventures.

After being separated from his companions in the storm, the sledge in which Dick was a passenger was driven rapidly away across the plain, the driver taking a course which he believed would insure a return to the city.

Had it not been for fear of the Moodas there was little doubt but that it would have been deemed the wisest course to bivouac for the night in the cover of a clump of trees.

But at any moment the bloodthirsty foe were apt to pounce upon them, which precluded any safety in such a move.

So it was decided to keep on for the city, and the strong "albo" was taxed to his utmost to keep the sledge moving. Through the driving storm they drove on until of a sudden the sledge struck an obstruction and was overturned.

All were hurled out, and the albo was dragged to his feet.

Before any could right the sledge and continue their journey the wind brought a series of terrific yells down to their hearing, and then they were surrounded by a legion of dark forms.

The Moodas were upon them.

The courageous Ignoos, knowing that death was their certain portion, fought nobly, but were quickly overpowered and killed before Dick Morris' eyes.

The brave young American sought to render them aid, but he was quickly seized by strong arms.

He was thrown upon his back and held a captive. Although he could not distinguish their faces, he could hear his captors talking excitedly over him, and recognized the hoarse, exultant voice of Sam Drake.

"Luck is on our side, messmates," the mutineer was saying. "We've got one of the young cubs. Kill him, eh? Oh, no, not yet. I am going to get the Eclipse back through him. I'll tell yer more about it later. Get into line thar all on ye. Lead the boy along."

"Coward and traitor," cried Dick, spiritedly. "What do you mean to do with me now?"

"You shall see, kid," chuckled the monster. "I'll have some fun with ye yet."

Of course Dick was powerless and obliged to follow the lead of his captors. Through the darkness and storm they tramped, guided only by shrill whistles for a long time, until they came at length to a thick wood.

Then a rudely constructed cabin of logs and boughs was found, in which was a fire, kindled by the mutineers. The natives, wrapped in their furs, slept upon the snow without, as they had always been accustomed to do, the fire being a source of superstitious terror to them.

Into this cabin Dick Morris was led. It was divided into two compartments.

What was in the compartment beyond Dick could not at once guess, but it soon became a question of deep interest to him.

He was placed near the fire, and his hands freed from the thongs which bound them. Then Drake came forward, and, throwing off his fur cowl, glared viciously into the youth's face.

"The tables are turning, you see, my fine schemer," he gritted. "It now comes my turn for revenge."

Dick felt a repulsive sense of suffocation in the man's presence. He would much have preferred to be left alone.

"I don't know what you mean by revenge, Sam Drake," he said calmly.

"You don't, eh?"

"I have done nothing to harm you. Without a motive you have no right to feel hard toward me."

"I haven't, eh? Haven't you ruined my life?"

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, I don't say that you are at fault any more than your five friends. But I will have my revenge upon them yet."

"But I don't understand you."

"What brought me here into this God-forsaken country? was it not you and your friends? Have I not been cruelly torn from my home and my friends in America? Is that a little matter? Am I not justified in seeking revenge?"

"Look here, Sam Drake!" exclaimed Dick, looking the villain fully and fairly in the eye. "Can you sit there and tell me unblushingly that all the dangers of this expedition were not painted to you before we left Buenos Ayres?"

"That don't make any difference."

"Yes, it does."

"I say it don't."

"Did you not accept the risk of your own free accord, and were you not offered the alternative of remaining at Buenos Ayres? You know this is the truth."

"Truth or not, it don't place me on my feet. I'm down here in this forsaken country and you fellows are responsible for my life."

"Then we are responsible for our own lives," cried Dick. "If you were a brave man, Sam Drake, you would see it in that light."

"Oh, you can't argue me out of my point. I know what's right and what's wrong. We know that we are the victims of a conspiracy, and all we can have is revenge."

"Erring fools," groaned Dick. "If you do not come to your senses soon, your lives will be sacrificed and ours as well. You endangered the yacht, and our only means of return to civilization and our lives."

"You can say nothing to change our minds," growled the brute, springing to his feet. "We are lost—lost at the South Pole. How can we ever hope to get home again; and you—you are responsible for our lives. You shall all die!"

Dick was enabled to see one truth at that moment which caused all hope to die out in his breast. There was a light in the man's eye which was not natural.

It was easy enough to see. He was of an inflammable temperament. The matter had weighed upon his mind with too much force and had overbalanced his intellect. He was mad—irretrievably mad.

At this moment there came a loud cry from without the hut which brought Drake to his feet.

He sprang out into the darkness, not reckoning the fact that his captive was left alone and unbound in the hut. It was Dick's opportunity, and he was not slow to embrace it.

"It is my chance," he cried. "I will make the trial."

But he had not taken a step toward the consummation of his daring intent when he was arrested by a thrilling sound.

The tones were thrilling and sweet.

Heavens! they were those of a female.

Nothing could have surprised Dick Morris more at that moment. He could scarcely believe his senses.

What impressed him more was the fact that the voice uttered an appeal in the Ignoos tongue for aid. Dick could understand nearly every word.

"Oh, help me, good friend. I am in great trouble. I am King Barak's daughter, and kept a prisoner here by the bad man who was just talking with you. Do not leave me here."

"What? You are King Barak's daughter—you are Zolu?"

"Yes," replied the maiden eagerly, for such she was. "And you will help me?"

"Help you, Zolu? Yes, I will lay down my life for you."

In an instant he had lifted the boughs and made an opening between the two chambers. Through this Zolu stepped and stood before him.

Beautiful as a dream she was, and the whole being of Dick Morris was thrilled. Nowhere in any civilized country had he ever seen her equal, and upon the impulse of the moment he caught her hand and kissed it.

"I am your slave, Zolu!" cried Dick passionately. "I will give my life in your defense, rest assured."

"I thank you," replied the girl shyly. "But we are in great danger here. These are desperate men and only want our lives."

"I am aware of that!" cried Dick. "But one moment; tell me how you came here in this place?"

"Ah, it was a great misfortune," replied the girl. "I left our city in a sledge this morning to visit our neighbors at a town a few miles from here. While I was there, and where my father now doubtless believes me to be in safety, the Moodas fell upon the town and destroyed it. I alone am the survivor, the rest being massacred in cold blood. That bad man you were talking with declares that I shall marry him. But I would rather die. But how came you here?"

"I was upon a hunt with my friends and Kedo," replied Dick, "when the monsters overtook us, killed my companions and made a captive of me, for what purpose I do not know."

"Oh, I am so glad harm did not come to you," said the girl artlessly, bending a melting gaze upon our young adventurer.

Dick drew a quick, short breath and felt funny about his heart. It almost stunned him when the sudden thought occurred to him that he might be falling in love with this pretty Ignoos maiden. He tried to banish the idea, but was not very successful.

All this had occurred in a remarkably short space of time, and a great peril had all the while hung over their devoted heads.

It was intensified in a thrilling manner, when the boughs of which the cabin was composed were suddenly lighted and a gigantic Moodas walked into the firelight.

CHAPTER XIV.

FUGITIVES IN THE WILDS.

Though it was a startling development it did not surprise Dick, for he had been momentarily in fear of such an event. He was quick to grasp the situation, and equally as quick to act.

A smothered scream escaped Zolu's lips, a guttural exclamation was given by the savage, and then Dick Morris made action.

He knew that their safety depended upon one sure and lightning-like move. He was not slow to make it.

The Moodas warrior had scarcely entered the circle of firelight when he was met with a terrific blow on the skull from a war club which had lain upon the snow, and which Dick had picked up.

Swift and unerring was the aim, and the giant dropped like a log.

Not even a cry escaped him.

An exclamation of relief escaped Dick, and turning, he grasped Zolu's hand. At any moment the other savages might return.

He raised the bough covering of the hut, and together they crept out into the night. All was whirling snow and blustering wind, but they recked not this.

Chance had it that not a savage happened to be near the hut at the moment, and their escape was unnoticed. A moment more and the storm was whirling about them.

Neither had any distinct idea of the direction they were taking. There was only the one impulse, to leave the enemy behind them, and actuated by it they staggered on.

When Zolu's strength finally gave out Dick took her upon his back, and in this manner they kept on for miles.

At length they entered a growth of trees. It was a welcome relief to have even such precarious shelter from the terrible storm, and finding a snug nook under a fallen tree trunk, Dick wrapped Zolu up in a part of his furs, and had the satisfaction of knowing that she was soon seeking recuperation in sleep.

After a while he grew drowsy himself. Withdrawing his arms from the sleeves of his fur coat to prevent their freezing (a custom among the Esquimaux), he covered his head and entire body, and was in a trice sound asleep himself.

When he awoke at length the Antarctic sun was shining feebly in his face.

Zolu soon awoke, apparently much refreshed, and with a glad smile upon her lovely face, scrambled to her feet.

They had made their escape from the Moodas. This was true enough, but they were not as yet by any manner of means out of danger. In a strange, desolate waste, they might wander about for an indefinite length of time before they could find friends.

They started out to leave the woods and cross the plain of snow in the direction in which they believed the ice city lay. For some while they plunged on through the snow, until it became plain to Dick that they must become exhausted before

many miles were covered, and a wave of despair swept over him.

"What are we going to do, Zolu?" he asked at length in despair. "I'm afraid we are in for it."

The pretty Ignoos maiden was fearless as ever, though, and cried cheerily:

"Great Koro will not see us perish, good friend. Though this plain is strange to me as it looks now, those look like the 'Albo' mountains yonder. I did know a small hamlet at the foot of them. It is scarcely three miles. If we can reach it we shall be all right yet."

The mountains seemed a great way off, but after an hour's hard tramp and climb they reached a valley just at their base, and which Zolu affirmed contained the village they were in quest of.

Mounting a hillock in the snow waste, Zolu soon located the place. Pointing to a distant collection of white ice houses, which Dick saw with a thrill, she cried:

"There they are. Come, now, we will find friends, and soon, my brave friend Dick, we shall be at my father's house."

As they drew near to the collection of ice houses they were struck with the fact that they looked deserted. Not a human being was to be seen about the place—not even an animal.

"Can they be asleep?" cried Dick, pausing in doubt. "What does it mean, Zolu?"

"No," she replied. "I fear that they have returned to the city for fear of the Moodas. If so——"

"If they are not there," he asked, "what of that, Zolu?"

"It is a long way to the city," she said. "It may be weeks before anybody comes this way. The Moodas have not come here yet. They will be sure to do so before long, and if we are found here they will kill us. We have no other place to stay."

Yet the ice houses had not been wholly divested of their furnishings. There were plenty of skins left to make mats of, and Dick fitted up one of the ice houses for their temporary abode.

Zolu prepared some meat and spread the frugal meal upon a block of ice covered with a skin, which served as a table, and the two hungry young people fell to and ate with a relish. In fact, they cleared the board.

Dick did not feel exactly comfortable, though, without a fire, and announced his determination of going into the forest near for some branches for fuel. Zolu nodded her head and busied herself about removing the debris of their supper.

Dick left the ice hut and was soon in the forest collecting the fuel. He was absent perhaps a half hour and had filled his arms with branches, when he heard a shrill, piercing scream.

It was Zolu's voice. With his heart in his mouth he rushed to an eminence and then beheld a chilling truth. His heart almost ceased to beat in the horror of the moment. No greater calamity could have happened.

For the ice house was surrounded by a jabbering, murderous crowd of the Moodas.

CHAPTER XV.

A NOVEL VICTORY.

Bob Singleton stepped down from his position very pale and weak after listening to Drake's dire threat concerning his friend Dick Morris. It seemed to him that the latter's fate must be sealed.

The Moodas were making active preparations for the assault.

To the east of the ice fortifications Captain Adams was busily engaged in deploying bodies of armed Ignoos, making ready for the attack in case the electric wire did not defeat the plans of the Moodas.

It was at this juncture that a great uproar arose in the town.

The non-return of the king's daughter, beautiful Zolu, had been brought to notice, and a great alarm was created. The monarch himself was half-crazed with terror for fear that the princess had fallen into the power of the enemy. Knowing their vengeful nature, he could not but foresee a horrible fate as her portion if such should prove to be the truth.

Nothing could be virtually done until after the battle, which now seemed imminent. The Moodas were coming up on the right with loud yells and manifestations of hostility.

The foes' center threw themselves forward, and Bob hastily touched the electric wire which communicated with the yacht.

The signal was understood by the professor, who proceeded to charge the wire with the full strength of the dynamos.

Bidding the Ignoos fall back behind the fortifications, Bob awaited the result.

At this moment came the grand crisis. The Moodas on the right, under command of McCarty, had attempted to scale the ice fort and had come in contact with the electric wire. The result was such as to baffle description.

Pack into the ditch at the base of the ice wall they rolled in scores. Loud yells and howls of terror broke from them, and there was a tremendous swaying of the attacking line.

Loud cheers rang out from the throats of the defenders, which angered the mutineers greatly. Drake, in the insanity of his wrath, ran down near to the ice fort and shook his fist savagely at those within it.

"Blame you all!" he yelled. "The end is not yet. I'll come square with you."

Bob Singleton was a dead shot with a rifle. Lifting his unerring piece to his shoulder and drawing a sight, he exclaimed:

"I don't want to kill that scoundrel, but I would like to give him a sharp reminder that his conduct is insulting and demands proper resentment."

"Good!" cried Captain Adams. "You can do it, too, Bob. Let him feel a bullet."

Crack! The rifle rang out sharp and whip-like upon the cold air. The bullet went true to its mark, and Drake, with a yell of pain and terror, clutched one of his arms and quickly bent a retreat. The bullet had penetrated his arm.

The rejoicing in the town was great. Nobody seemed to fear a fresh attack. While the mutineers would attempt to dissipate the fears of the ignorant, superstitious horde, it was not likely that they would succeed in inducing them to again face the electric wire.

And now anxiety with regard to the fate of Dick Morris and the Princess Zolu began to grow strong.

Bob Singleton was no less concerned about his chum than the king about his daughter, the beautiful Zolu. The enemy had been signally repulsed, and that all-engrossing problem settled, a new one came up to take its place.

"My soul!" gasped Bob Singleton, in an agony of anxious fear. "I will not have it that Dick is in the power of those fiends. They will wreak all their black revenge upon him."

"What can we do?" asked Captain Adams. "Ought we not to make some active effort?"

"Certainly we ought," cried Bob. "We must risk our lives to save Dick. There is only one thing we can do, and that is attack the Moodas in the open. If we can defeat them there, we can perhaps rescue Dick."

"Right," cried Captain Adams and the professor simultaneously. "That is our proper move. Let us organize at once."

It was a desperate resolution, and the outcome could only be guessed. If the struggle came hand-to-hand, and the barbarians should overcome their superstitious fear, the result might be most disastrous to the Ignoos.

Bob knew this, but had conceived a daring plan of procedure, when a dire calamity was announced which for the moment upset all their plans and theories.

One of the Ignoos came rushing up, white-faced and terror-stricken. It was some moments before his excited exclamations could be well understood by our adventurers; then a wild cry of alarm and terror broke from Bob's lips.

"Heavens! the mutineers have gained the yacht by some strategy! Quick! to the shore, or all is lost!"

CHAPTER XVI.

A DARING SCHEME FOR DEFENSE.

Terrible indeed were the emotions of Dick Morris to find that the snow hut was surrounded by the fierce Moodas. It is useless to attempt to depict the desperation of his feelings.

"I will die before they shall harm her!" he gritted between set teeth. "She must not fall into their hands."

Wild screams were escaping Zolu, who had barricaded the open entrance to the ice house with a block of ice. The savages were endeavoring to force this in and were jabbering away like a parcel of fiends.

Of course it was but a slight task for them to succeed, and forcing a way into the abode, they were about to pounce upon their fair prey. But Zolu was a brave girl, and in spite of her deadly terror had found time to prepare a possible avenue of escape.

With all her strength she had succeeded in forcing a block of the ice out of an aperture used generally for a window, and

as her foes sprang into the hut she darted through this aperture like a bird, the savages after her.

"Come on, you dirty tribe of ignoramus!" shouted Dick in the infusion of the moment. "I'll singe your hides for you. Whoop! I'm a bad man, I warn you, when I'm mad!"

Zolu clung terrified to Dick's arm. A bold resolve entered the plucky youth's breast. He saw that the Moodas were afraid of the firebrand and he determined to take advantage of the fact.

Waving the brand above his head he made a terrific charge down upon them. The result was ludicrous in the extreme. Dick got near enough to ignite the oily bearskin suit of one of them, and in a twinkling the barbarian was howling with pain and throwing the blazing garments right and left as he fled like a madman.

He was stripped nearly to the skin when he succeeded in throwing off the blazing skins, and disappeared as fast as his legs could carry him into the deep forest.

The sight of him so terrified the other barbarians that they waited no longer to dispute the pass, but like maniacs also fled, leaving the American boy victorious. It was a daring, skillful act, and Dick's heart gave a great leap when he saw its success.

Fire was an element the Moodas were unable to cope with, and so long as Dick carried the blazing torch he had no need to fear a fresh attack. The barbarians did not halt until they had reached the summit of a high eminence more than a half mile distant.

Dick had won the day by a clever trick and was highly elated.

He shook the torch threateningly at his foes, and then, drawing Zolu's arm within his own, started back to the ice houses.

Arrived at the ice house, Dick tied up a bundle of the boughs and strapped them to his back for future use. Such effective weapons he could not afford to do without.

But though they had repulsed the foe, our two wanderers were by no means out of danger. Great perils and uncertainties lay before them. Indeed, Dick scarcely knew what to do.

It was a long way to the Ignoos city. The cold was extreme, and though they did not suffer extremely from it while exercising, there was no doubt but that if they should lie down to sleep upon the exposed plain they would be certain to freeze to death.

To keep upon their feet all the way to the city would be impossible, even should they succeed in eventually reaching it, a journey which would embrace several days. Again, they knew not what might have been the fate of their companions, lost in the storm, or even of the city itself. The Moodas were in heavy force, and could perhaps concentrate strength enough to overpower the place. This thought caused a shiver to run over Dick's frame.

"Deuce take the luck!" growled Dick, impatiently. "I never was in such a fix in my life. Of course there is no other way but to remain here and make the best of it. We must keep constant watch of the enemy."

With this they went into the ice house again. With the idea in view of remaining where they were, Zolu set to work arranging the interior of the place so that it would be once more fit for habitation.

During this time Dick kept good watch of the enemy. Thus a day was passed. When one slept the other kept watch.

A fire was kept up in the ice house, and they were quite cozy and comfortable. It is safe to say that had it not been for the fearful peril hanging over them they would have enjoyed themselves hugely in their frigid exile.

But a crisis finally came.

It was found necessary to go out for firewood, and when they returned, scarcely a half hour later, it was to find every ice house in the village demolished and the place in the possession of certainly a hundred of the Moodas.

Dick's heart sank like lead, for he well knew that numbers give courage, and before such odds even his invincible terror-inspiring firebrand must lose its potency. A great crisis had surely come.

The savage Moodas were dancing and yelling like fiends over the ruins of the ice village, no doubt exerting themselves to a frenzy which would enable them to dare the fire in the hands of the strange invader of the South Pole regions. So when Dick and Zolu appeared it was the signal for action.

The original half score of barbarians had been reinforced by fully a hundred others. They certainly meant to overwhelm the foe if numbers would do it.

Straight for Dick and his fair companion the savages

dashed. It required quick work upon the young American's part to get in readiness for them.

He quickly ignited a number of the pitchy boughs and the breeze fanned them into a great flame. In the cover of the smoke Dick drew Zolu, and was for a moment safe.

The Moodas formed a circle about the fire and their intended victims. They did not venture within the charmed radius of twenty feet from the flames, contact with which they dreaded so much.

Soon the boughs must burn out, and the fire would be done. It was this alone which kept the Moodas aloof. Then they would be at the mercy of the foe.

Gradually the flames of the burning brush began to die out. Only the smoke was left, and the stiff wind was hastily dispersing this. But a few more moments of grace were left. Only one course was left to Dick, and he had little faith in its success.

But in lieu of any better move he accepted it. Grasping one of the blazing brands, he drew Zolu close to him and charged out of the smoke upon the barbarians. It was a luckless move.

The Moodas fell back and a loud yell went up. But one of them threw a heavy missile which, hurtling through the air, struck Dick on the head and instantly deprived him of consciousness.

The result was terrible. Dick fell to the snow-covered ground. Zolu, screaming wildly, threw herself on his body, and the Moodas, like hungry wolves, pounced upon both of them.

In a trice Zolu was passed from one to another of the barbarians, and her delicate hands tied behind her with a thong of hide. Then Dick came to, and, staggering to his feet, was treated in like manner.

The Moodas, contrary to his expectation, did not instantly deprive them both of life. He was astonished to see that they meant to treat them as prisoners.

At length they were marched off down the valley, and Dick learned they were being taken to the Moodas' village, some distance away.

It would be dull and monotonous to dwell further upon the long journey to the valley of the Moodas. Suffice it to say that it was reached safely in due time, and, contrary to the customs of the Ignoos, the barbarians built their houses of a kind of sandstone.

In one of these houses, in different apartments, the prisoners were quartered. The village of the Moodas was large and indicated that the tribe was a powerful one. The valley, which extended far to the southward, was dotted with the stone habitations of the Moodas.

No sign of the mutineers had been seen. What disposition the enemy were to make of them Dick could only guess.

They were treated at least with no unkindness by their captors, and Dick was hoping for the best, when one day after they had been for some weeks in the valley, affairs took a fearful, disastrous turn.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LOSS OF THE YACHT.

With the alarming report that had come from the yacht, a thousand terrifying reflections flashed through Bob Singleton's mind. What more dreadful calamity could befall them than that the Eclipse should fall into the power of the mutineers?

He exchanged glances with Adams, who was scarcely less alarmed. Then, without further speech, both started for the bay, followed more slowly by Professor Hamilton.

Before the shore was reached both Bob and the captain saw at a glance how the disaster had been brought about. The attention of the inhabitants of the entire city, as well as that of our adventurers, had been drawn to the encampment of the Moodas visible from the fortifications.

Of course no attack had been anticipated from the direction of the bay, as it was known that the Moodas were not boatmen or swimmers, even had they the temerity to venture into the icy water. So, through what now proved a most serious oversight, that quarter had been left unguarded.

Drake had been cunning enough to set afoot a daring scheme for the outwitting of their foes. This was to creep around a sparsely wooded elevation and gain the headland, and at an unobserved moment the shore. There were, of course, plenty of the coracles to be found, and watching their opportunity, when the professor went ashore, the mutineers boldly paddled off in coracles and boarded the yacht.

With the most bitter despair depicted upon their pale faces,

the captain and the young yacht's master looked at each other. The aged scientist, coming up at this moment, joined lustily in the lamentation, for, as he averred in despairing tones, all his valuable specimens and his electrical instruments were aboard the craft and would be lost to him.

The three then started for the yacht, but when they got to the shore, the yacht was some distance out, being sailed by their enemies.

Sorrowfully, slowly, our adventurers made their way back up through the icy streets. Soon they had commingled with a great crowd of the Ignoos, who seemed very much excited.

The cause was easily divined and quite justifiable. The Moodas were moving in a body nearer the western ramparts, and seemed threatening to make a fresh attack.

Such a thing could not fail to prove most disastrous, as the electric wire was now rendered quite useless as a means of defense. A hand-to-hand conflict would be a most doubtful one.

There was but one matter of consolation. The Eclipse's cannon yet remained upon the ice ramparts, and might be potent enough to drive the enemy off. If not, the result drew a shudder from our now isolated friends as they mentally pictured it.

A few moments later they had gained a position from which they could see the enemy. It was true that they were moving up nearer to the city walls in a body. The departure of the yacht was of course known to them, and this may have emboldened them to make a fresh attack. "Whichever way it is," cried Bob Singleton, excitedly, "something has got to be done, and immediately. Our all depends upon the preservation of the city. At the present outlook our lives are lost, and we may as well give them up in honorable battle as to perish in the pitiless ice."

A cheer burst from the lips of Captain Adams and Professor Dionysius, which was taken up by the Ignoos all along the line of the ice fort. The brave words of the young yacht's owner seemed to infuse all with new life and courage.

Bob dispatched his orders rapidly. The wire, of course, was not to be depended upon now, but he caused the brass cannon to be moved over to the attacked quarter.

Courageously the Ignoos rallied about their young leader.

Our friends, aided by the Ignoos, made such a brave stand that the Moodas were driven off. But now determined to find out what had become of Dick and Zolu, a party was formed to go and try to locate them.

The party was made up of five—the professor and Captain Adams, Bob, and two of the Ignoos as drivers. Three albos were hitched to a sledge sufficiently large to carry them all. Warm, impenetrable furs lined the sledge, and all precautions deemed expedient and advisable were taken against the possibility of starving or freezing.

Thus equipped the little party of invaders started out. After the ninth day of their journey the country began to undergo a material change.

Gradually large tracts of timber were encountered and a warm wind began to blow, so warm that our explorers were finally obliged to remove their outer wraps of fur. A thrill of triumph pervaded the breasts of all, for they knew that they were now nearing the warm valley.

The snow began to rapidly disappear, and three days later they found themselves in a section utterly devoid of the article. It was of course impossible now to proceed further with the sledges, so it was arranged that the albos were to be corraled here in charge of the two drivers until the three explorers should return.

These arrangements were made, and the three plucky Americans, with their rifles, set out upon the most hazardous part of their mission. They had reached a higher point of ground, and right in the midst of a vast collection of bowlders, when a thrilling, terrifying cry broke from Bob Singleton's lips.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DICK MARRIES ZOLU, ACCORDING TO NATIVE CUSTOM.

While the Moodas had treated their prisoners, Dick Morris and Zolu, with a certain degree of kindness, they had nevertheless, in actions if not in words, given them plainly to understand that they were prisoners—nothing more nor less.

The two had been allowed to have some intercourse through a small crevice in the stone partition which separated their prison cells. But now a dreaded and unfortunate contingency arose.

One day a delegation of the barbarian chiefs came to the door of Dick's cell, and he was led out before them.

It required but a glance to satisfy him that a crisis had arrived.

Rudely fashioned stones formed the seats, and these were placed about in a circle, and upon them sat the dozen or more of the councilors.

Dick was led forth and into the center of this circle. He did not change color, but stood before his captors calm and courageous. He could only guess as to what was to come. But he knew that a change in affairs was to take place immediately.

After a general row, which nearly came to blows, the councilors seemed to agree, and then one of them advanced and began sign talk with the young American.

Dick soon made out what the barbarians meant. This was that his life was to be spared if he would agree to join the tribe and become one of their number.

Of course he readily accepted the offer, inwardly resolving to cut sticks and make his way back to the Ignoos as soon as a good opportunity offered.

The Moodas seemed pleased with his ready acquiescence, and his bonds were at once cut and he was set free.

Scarcely had Dick been freed when the thought of Zolu came to him. What was to be her fate? The same instant she was led forth from her prison and into the council ring.

The Moodas maintained a silence for some moments after her appearance, but gazed at her beauty with evil, distorted features and strange flashing glances. With downcast eyes Zolu stood before her captors for some moments, when finally one of the councilors opened the harangue.

He advanced and gripped the girl's wrist. From the signs made during the course of the discussion which followed Dick was horrified to guess the wretch's meaning. Zolu was a captive of war, and this savage claimed her as one of his wives, or slaves, for such the Moodas women were.

"Hands off, you inhuman wretch!" Dick cried in a ringing voice, rushing upon the savage. "Show respect, and at least humanity, to one of her sex."

With a swift blow the daring young American struck the wretch's grip from the young girl's wrist, and knocked him down. Immediately Dick had a fight on his hands. The Moodas urged their companion to do Dick up, and formed a ring about them.

It did not take Dick long to settle the ambition to fight of the native, for he was not skilled in the art of self-defense.

The Moodas congratulated Dick on his victory.

Dick thought if he could marry Zolu it might make it better for both of them, and the natives might let them alone. So he told the girl he loved her and would marry her, and she also said she loved him and would marry him.

Then Dick consulted the Moodas chief, and he gave his consent to have a native wedding.

So they were married according to native custom, and went to live in a native hut.

One morning as Dick and Zolu were eating breakfast an excitement was heard in the village.

Dick stepped out of the hut to see what was the matter.

He had not gone ten steps when a spectacle which thrilled him to the core met his gaze. Surrounded by a gesticulating, excited crowd of Moodas, he saw three white men. They were his friends and fellow adventurers, Bob Singleton, the professor and Captain Adams.

Let us return for a brief moment to the spot where we left the three invaders of the Moodas country.

They had reached the boulder-crowned eminence when the thrilling cry which alarmed the others escaped Bob Singleton.

"Look—look! My soul! What is that?"

There was no mistake. It was the same valley which they had viewed once before, and to the eastward they saw the same unbroken expanse of summer sea.

"Hurrah!" shouted Bob, in the exuberance of his feelings. "Here we are at last!"

"Yes," agreed the professor, "here we are truly. But we don't know what sort of a reception we are going to meet with."

The words had hardly left his lips when there came a loud cry from the heights above them, and looking up, they were startled to see a score of the Moodas warriors bounding down the slope toward them.

They came to a halt but a few yards distant and made guttural exclamations and brandished their arms. They did not venture nearer, and Bob took upon himself the part of spokesman. Stepping forward he held up his hand in token of peace and then began sign talk.

Gradually the Moodas drew nearer. They made nothing but peaceful manifestations, and Bob was disposed to trust them.

"I think they are in good faith," he exclaimed to his companions. "Shall we trust them?"

It was finally decided to do so, and they accompanied the hunting party, for such it was, down into the valley. As they drew near to the town a great crowd came out to meet them.

The excitement was intense, but through all Bob had but one thought, and that was of Dick Morris.

Therefore his emotions may well be imagined when he saw his dear chum advancing from his cabin. For an instant Dick stood like one petrified, then he rushed forward with a wild cry and the two dear friends were closely embraced.

Reunited at last.

"Dear old chum," cried Dick, with tears welling from his eyes. "How glad I am. But—how came you here?"

"We came for you," replied Bob.

They remained in consultation for a long while, the Moodas grouped silently and respectfully about.

Suddenly Bob Singleton said:

"How forgetful we are. We do not know the fate of Zolu, the daughter of King Barak. It would be heartless as well as ungrateful in us not to ascertain that."

Dick Morris started as though shot, and a quick gasp escaped him while he changed color.

"Heavens!" he exclaimed. "I have forgotten myself. Even had we not lost the yacht, I could not have left this country. As for Zolu, she is safe here with me."

"Explain yourself!" demanded Bob in the sheerest astonishment.

"I will, as briefly as possible. I could not leave this country now, for I am sacredly tied. I am married to Zolu."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TWO TRIBES ARE UNITED.

Unmitigated was the shock of surprise experienced by his fellow explorers at this astounding declaration of Dick Morris.

"Where is your bride?" asked Bob.

"That stone cabin is our home."

At this juncture Adams mustered up courage and common sense enough to say:

"Mr. Dick, you have my congratulations. The Princess Zolu is worthy any man, even though she is an Ignoos maiden."

"She is splendid," cried Bob, enthusiastically.

A jolly laugh followed, and then they all repaired to the cabin for an introduction to Dick's beautiful bride.

Zolu was undisguised and sincere in her joy at meeting them. With tears of joy in her eyes she asked after her father, King Barak, and her friends in the ice city. It was a happy gathering.

Our friends now saw there was no immediate chance of their returning to the Ignoo country, so they sent the Ignoo drivers back to King Barak, apprizing him of the fact.

The weeks passed away, and then a messenger came from King Barak with the astounding declaration that he was coming upon a visit to the Moodas country with an army of one thousand men.

"My soul!" exclaimed Dick; "that means war, and it will be a disastrous expedition for King Barak. He should practise more discretion."

But while these anxious days were weighing heavily upon the minds of our explorers a fatal and most dire calamity was impending over the Moodas people.

A deadly, invincible foe appeared suddenly in their midst, dealing death right and left, and so terrible was the slaughter that for a time there was warrantable fear that the whole Moodas valley would be completely depopulated.

It was an epidemic of most frightful sort which now seized upon the hardy Moodas, and for a time threatened to sweep the beautiful valley clean and clear.

It descended upon them like the bolt of a wrathful Jove.

A few shepherds in the mountain region returned to their rude homes after their day's work, and were taken one after another with a strange illness, like which none had ever been seen in the valley.

Like wildfire the dreadful pestilence spread, until from one end of the South Pole land to the other hundreds of the Moodas were dropping off. It spared none. There was no checking the disease. In every case it proved fatal, and none seemed exempt from it.

What was, however, more singular than all else, it did not appear contagious. At least our explorers did not take it, though brought into actual contact with it.

It now behooved our friends to play the part of Samaritan, and they did not flinch in their duty. Horrified beyond measure, all plunged right into the thickest of the pestilence and essayed to overcome it.

It remained for the professor to hit upon the preventive.

Several of the cabins were moved together and made into a hospital. There were roots and herbs in plenty to be gathered in the valley, and in quick time the professor had a series of decoctions which would have done credit to the best homeopath, and which did not fail to accomplish great ends.

Hundreds of the terrified savages flocked to the "hospital" and drank of the professor's wonderful medicines. None was refused, and all who drank were saved.

It was at the most critical point when the strange pestilence held its greatest sway that King Barak and his men appeared upon the scene. There was no danger of a conflict now, for the Moodas were too deeply distressed to think of aught else.

Our friends held a conference with the magnanimous ignoos monarch. The result was a wise policy was adopted. The ignoos men laid aside their weapons and came down into the valley as comforters and nurses to their late foes.

They did not fear the pestilence. It seemed peculiar alone to the dark-skinned people, there being no instance in which one of the ignoos caught it. Tenderly, compassionately, the ignoos lent the barbarians assistance, virtually fulfilling the maxim of returning good for evil.

It was months before the pestilence was finally stamped out. More than half of the Moodas nation had fallen victims to the scourge. Need it be said that the survivors paid respectful homage to those who had proved their saviors?

The weeks drifted by into months, and the beautiful Antarctic summer again settled down upon the Moodas valley. The Moodas and the ignoos fraternized.

Our adventurers had now abandoned all hope of ever regaining the yacht or leaving the cold climate of the South Pole, and were in a great measure reconciled to their lot.

They became occupied with the project of working a great reform and civilization in the natives. The foundations for a great city were laid in the valley.

Iron ore was forged and tools were speedily fashioned. In all these processes the practical knowledge and inventive genius of Professor Hamilton came to the fore.

Axes were forged from the ore and ground to a sharp edge upon sandstone.

The waters of a stream were dammed up and an actual sawmill was built. Construction went on rapidly after that, good, comfortable frame houses being built.

In a short while many of the more intelligent ignoos had learned to handle the tools quite proficiently. The Moodas were as a class more obtuse, and better qualified for the laborious work of lifting and carrying.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LAUNCHING.

Volumes might be written descriptive of the accomplishments of our friends in the task of civilizing the natives. Of course it was impossible to teach them to read and write, but the professor already had a class of infants at their A B C's, of which he felt prouder than any college class he ever directed in his life.

The "Valley City" was thriving, and quite a list of artisans and mechanics were being monthly graduated, when a new scheme found formation in the brain of Captain Adams.

He longed to ride the ocean wave, even if it were only in the stern of a dory. It occurred to him that such a large and powerful nation as the ingoos now promised to become should have a maritime power. The project was not impracticable, and he determined to become the founder.

There was a beautiful harbor not three miles from the city. A good wharf could be easily constructed, and also a shipyard. He grasped the resolution and determined to found a merchant navy in the new land of his adoption.

"Reckon I know a ship from the keelson to her masthead," he exclaimed. "I guess I can build and rig one. There's everything to work with, and I vow I'll do it."

Accordingly the captain collected a gang of workmen and moved down to the harbor. He soon had them at work constructing a quay and docks. Of course all this was laborious work, it being necessary to rig derricks to be worked with chains, for hempen rope was as yet a foreign quantity, though the professor was rapidly perfecting a process.

The captain made a modest beginning. He had planks

sawed to the right length at the sawmill, and bent the root of a tree for a keel, and made a stanch little rowboat.

After constructing quite a number of these boats the captain decided to aim higher, and built a small sloop. The work now began in earnest. It involved considerable work in laying the keel, for the captain was obliged to oversee and direct everything personally.

The keel was finally laid and firmly bolted with the nearest approach to steel bolts that could be forged. Then huge beams of kiln-dried timber were employed to construct the monster's ribs. Rapidly the sloop now began to grow, and it was a beautiful summer's day when the captain himself drove the last nail in her hull.

The next thing to consider was her masts and rigging.

The matter of sails and ropes was a puzzling one. However, the professor, with his wonderful knack, rigged up a loom, and succeeded in weaving a fairly satisfactory cloth out of the fibers of a peculiar plant which grew in the valley. It was laborious work, for many a yard of the chocolate-colored material was demanded.

But it remained for Dick to make the great discovery of a plant similar to the cotton plant, from which a white cloth of remarkable strength of texture could be made. Sheep were plentiful in the hills, and from their wool twine was made, which was easily fashioned into cordage by the application of pitch and tar.

The most difficult task of all, perhaps, was the manufacture of tackle blocks and pulleys. It required much scientific work to perfect these seeming simply-constructed affairs.

Great excitement prevailed when the news spread that the Eclipse was finished.

The launching day was set apart as a gala day. The entire nations of ignoos and Moodas crowded to the shore and bluffs to see the stays knocked out from under the sloop. It was a beautiful afternoon, and Captain Adams from the deck directed the process.

The heavy blows fell cheerily upon the air, and the craft trembled from stem to stern as she felt the new life given her.

At length the Eclipse settled upon her track, and all at once, with a monster, graceful plunge, shot out into the water. Like a bird she righted herself, and then, as Captain Adams and Bob unloosed her mainsheet, caught the wind, keeled slightly to starboard, but rounded prettily and as light as a feather cleft the waters of the bay.

Dick Morris was at the wheel. For some moments nothing could be heard above the cheering of those on shore, and then Captain Adams turned to Bob with beaming face.

"Nothing I ever did in my life has given me so much deep pleasure as this," he said.

"I congratulate you," replied Bob.

"She needs a trifle more ballast. Let us bring her about and drop her anchor. After shipping the ballast we will take as many people aboard as we can and have a trial cruise down the coast."

"I am with you."

The others were pleased with the captain's proposition, and the Eclipse sloop was hove to in the harbor.

It required some time to properly adjust her ballast, but all lent a hand, and she soon was made steady.

Then the plan was imparted to the people, who crowded aboard until the load was complete, when the impromptu sail was given to the wind, and, the breeze catching it, the Eclipse bowled merrily away over the whitecaps.

Once more the sloop was cleaving the dark waters of the Antarctic sea, when Dick, who had relinquished the wheel to Bob and gone aloft, gave a great cry.

An object just to windward was the cause of this, and it had the appearance of a remarkable species of sea monster rising and falling upon the wave crests.

To please the professor, the course was changed to sail down upon it, but it needed only a few moments' sailing to reveal to our adventurers a startling truth. The dark object was not a sea monster.

"Heavens!" cried Bob Singleton, in a hollow voice, "it is the electric yacht!"

CHAPTER XX.

THE HOMESICK FEVER.

There was no mistake. The dark object drifting about at the will of wind and wave was nothing more nor less than the electric yacht. Hoarse and excited, Captain Adams shouted to Bob to hold the sloop up to the wind, and then the next moment they were within hailing distance.

At first the yacht seemed abandoned, but presently a man was seen to emerge from the cabin and wave his arms wildly.

"Ahoy!" shouted Captain Adams. "Is that you, Jack McCarty?"

It was truly the pilot of the Eclipse, and he answered the hail in a weak, piping voice.

"For heaven's sake, come aboard as soon as ye can," he replied. "I am on my last legs, and haven't the strength of a salamander."

"What is the matter?"

"I am starving. The yacht's stores are all gone, and I've been chewing my finger-ends for three days."

"Where are your mates—Drake and Smith?"

"Dead!"

"Heavens!" gasped Dick Morris, as he heard this. "Drake and Smith dead?"

As both Bob and Dick were anxious to go aboard the Eclipse, the sloop was left in the care of the professor. A few moments later a boat was lowered, and they were soon on the yacht's deck.

McCarty presented a pitiable sight. He was but a shadow of his former self, his eyes being hollow and sunken, and his flesh flabby and emaciated. He seemed overjoyed to greet the explorers, and gasped feebly:

"Blow me, messmates, I hope you don't feel hard toward me, for I swear to ye I was not so bad, and would have been glad to stick to ye if it hadn't been for Drake. But he threatened to kill me if I did."

"You say Drake and Smith are dead?"

"Yes."

"How did they die?"

"Ugh! it was a bad mess," said McCarty, shrugging his shoulders. "If you have the proper reckoning, it's been fourteen months since we sailed away from the ice city."

"Yes," agreed all.

"Well, during that time we sailed everywhere in these blamed seas. A year to a day had passed when Smith and Drake fell out. They tackled each other like a couple of horse mackerel, and such a ruction you never see."

"They fought, did they?"

"Yes; the electrical apparatus got out of gear, and Smith was unable to fix it. They got to quarreling over it, when Drake drew a knife and stabbed Smith. Then Smith had just strength enough left to throw Drake across the dynamos. They got in the way of the current, made a circuit, and were both dead men instantly."

McCarty was first given care, food being given to him. Then our adventurers proceeded to make an examination of the yacht.

It was found quite intact, with the possible exception of a disarrangement of the electrical apparatus, which the professor assured all he could repair without much trouble.

The return to the harbor was quickly made, the yacht being towed by the sloop. Poor McCarty was in a bad state, but there was a chance left for his recovery, and, when the landing was reached, he was conveyed to the abode of Dick Morris and given over to Zolu's kind care.

A more grateful fellow could not be imagined. He described his experiences on board the yacht with Drake as a dream of terror. With proper food and care, in a few days he picked up wonderfully.

With the yacht as a means of transportation down the harbor, our friends found but little use for the sloop. But Captain Adams occupied his time in teaching the Ingoos how to sail the craft, until they became so proficient that they did not fear to take her out to sea alone and unaided.

Six months passed. The city in the valley had grown to something like enormous extent, and, as all the natives were now housed and engaged in studying the various arts taught them by the explorers, a dull time came on.

After all, it was a wearisome, monotonous life, with not a little of privation and drudgery. Captain Adams was the first one to take the home fever. Then Bob fell in with him, which was all that was necessary.

Bob really began to feel homesick. There was no mistake about it. At length he brought matters to a climax when he declared:

"Boys, there is no use in our resigning ourselves to the thought of staying down here all our lives. Is there a man in this crowd who does not want to go home?"

All eyes were turned upon Dick Morris. His face was very pale, but he replied:

"It is quite impossible for me to go home."

"No," acquiesced Bob. "Dick has a pretty wife and is happy. We cannot blame him."

"That is true," agreed Captain Adams. "But there is a very strong reason why we should try to get home again. The positive evidence that a race of people actually exists at the South Pole will be of great value to the scientific world."

"Right!" cried Professor Hamilton excitedly, for he had the fever the worst of any.

Now that the fever had been brought to a culminating point, there was no power or influence strong enough to stem it. Preparations were at once begun.

First the yacht was overhauled and put in repair. Then the matter of provisions called for attention next. It was, however, easy enough to get these, and the hold of the vessel was filled to repletion with the choicest of dried and smoked meats.

Nothing was left undone to insure a safe cruise. The explorers worked like beavers, and, long before the three months were up, the yacht was placed all in readiness.

CHAPTER XXI.

POOR ZOLU.

Of course the course pursued by Dick Morris was nothing more than any honorable man should have adopted. Yet it will be conceded that the inducement was powerful beyond understanding, and many a well-meaning man might have stretched his scruples sufficiently to have taken a fond leave of a wife who, it is true, was bound to him by other than Christian rites, yet was no less a lawful wife; above all, when the wife was a native of a barbaric clime. But Dick would sacrifice life rather than honor.

So he bravely kept down all thoughts of the sort and tried hard to become reconciled to his lot.

But it was too much of a struggle for him. In spite of all he could not help but show it. Haggard were his features, and dark lines hung perpetually beneath his eyes, the sure sign of mental worryment.

The female sex are wonderfully keen of perception and sensitive as to personal slights. Zolu was particularly so. The change which had come over Dick could by no means escape her notice, and she was not long in getting at the truth.

But when the stunning thought crashed upon her that Dick was disappointed at his inability to go home, to leave the land of the South Pole, and that she was responsible, it nearly crushed her.

Of course she could not accompany him. She could never learn the customs of his people, more than all else exist in the climate so radically different from that in which she had been born. No, he would not want to take her there. She must remain.

"I have been very happy with my dear husband, but I am unhappy now, for a dreadful fear comes to me that he does not care for me as he did, that I am a stumbling-block in his path."

"You—Zolu! My own wife! How can you think so base a thing of me?"

"Then I am not an object of dislike to you? I am not in your way? Tell me the truth."

"In my way?" ejaculated Dick. "What do you mean by that?"

"Zolu is very watchful," she said. "Nothing comes over him she does not perceive. Of late he has had something upon his mind."

"But, my Zolu—"

"Wait. I can read his mind," she said in her native tongue. "His friends are going away—going back to that land from which he came. It is but natural that his heart should yearn for that land."

"But I would never go and leave you, Zolu," he cried.

"It is true!" she exclaimed. "It is Zolu keeps him. Listen, my husband. It is right that you should wish to go back to your home. Here is your freedom. I give it back to you. You shall not stay here with Zolu. Go! I will always think of you—"

She nearly broke down, and receded from him. Impelled by a delirious impulse, he sprang after her.

"Heavens! What would you do, Zolu? Do you think I would give you up? Only with my life. Death can only part us."

"Death!"

The word escaped her lips in a tremulous tone, but it did not reach Dick's hearing. He clasped her to his breast and

poured out to her his deathless love anew as they walked back to their home. But she returned his advances in a strange, unnatural way.

"She is strangely sensitive," he said to himself uneasily. "It will wear away. She will be all right to-morrow."

But he strolled down to the wharf where they were busy getting the yacht in readiness for the start. The sight made his whole being tingle. Like a flood came over him the stunning realization that the time was but brief when he would be separated from these, his dearest friends. How could he bear it? It almost unmanned him.

Bob Singleton was coming up from the wharf and saw him. His chum stopped and held out his hand.

"It breaks my heart to think of leaving you, Dick," he declared. "How can I agree to it? We have been chums so long."

"Oh, Bob!" was all Dick could say; then he broke down.

It was an unusual sight to see Dick Morris display emotion of what he would have characterized the "baby" sort. But tears streamed from his eyes, and great sobs shook his manly form like a reed.

"Pshaw!" he cried at length. "What a booby I am, Bob. Are you not disgusted? But, really, you touched a tender spot."

"Which shows that you have a heart," declared Bob, in the fullness of his heart. "But cannot we make different arrangements, Dick? Can you not take Zolu with you?"

"Bob, tell me, old friend, would it be a sin—would it be so very wrong to leave Zolu? Would I be doing a wrong act? Tell me your candid opinion."

"I—I would not like to say, Dick. Yet I will say this: If Zolu would agree to the separation and declare herself satisfied, then I do not think it would be altogether wrong."

"When—when do you go?" asked Dick, in a strange, metallic voice.

"To-morrow morning we shall leave," replied Bob, as he hastened to answer the summons.

"To-morrow morning," repeated Dick, in a wearied sort of voice, his eyes having a fixed, unnatural stare. Then he turned about and gave a start as he saw Zolu standing before him.

The young girl had seen him conversing with his friend, and had crept up behind a bowlder and overheard the conversation. She understood enough of English to catch the drift of their talk. The effect upon her was, though invisible to Dick, yet of a terrible sort.

"Zolu, we have been very happy together, have we not?" he said, in a rambling way. "Would you care very much if we were to separate—if I were to go away with my friends?"

"Oh, no; not very much. After you were gone I should find some young man of our people who would marry me. I am the king's daughter, you know."

"Then it would not break your heart—would not mar your happiness?"

"Oh, no," she replied, in a light voice, and actually laughed.

He kissed her and released her. Then, like a man intoxicated, he reeled down to the wharf and sprang on board the yacht.

"Hullo, friends," he cried hilariously. "It's all fixed now. I'm going with you. I've fixed it all right with Zolu. She is going to marry another chap, and everything is all right. I'm with you."

All suspected that something was wrong with Dick from his queer manner and words, but nothing was said, and he was warmly welcomed. He lent a willing and eager hand about the preparations and seemed in a peculiarly happy mood.

It was the close of the day, and, somewhat weary from the day's work, our explorers had found seats near the pilot-house and were engaged in conversation. Dick sat near, seemingly buried in thought.

Suddenly, with a startling cry, he sprang up and gazed about him wildly.

"What am I doing here?" he cried. "Where is Zolu?"

Before anything could be said or done, he had sprung from the yacht's deck and was rushing up the cliffs. Fearful that harm might come to him, and satisfied now that he had not been in his right mind, our friends started after him.

Up the cliffs they ran. Dick kept on, as though pursued by fiends, in the direction of the village. Straight as an arrow he ran for the house which Zolu had made into so charming a home for him.

He staggered up to the door, partly blind in his exhaustion. Breathing hoarsely, he cried:

"Zolu! My Zolu! Come to me!"

There was no reply. All was quiet about the place. A terrible, haunting, lonesome fear seized him.

It required all his strength to push open the door and enter. There upon a rude bench by the wall he saw his pretty Ingoos wife reclining. But her face was turned away from him.

"Zolu, my wife!" he cried. "I did not mean what I said. I was mad. All the power in the world could not drag me from you. Oh, for my life, to save my breaking heart, forgive me! Come back!"

There was no reply. Zolu did not move. A strange impulse caused him to draw nearer. He put a hand upon her beautiful hair. He parted it, his hand encountered her flesh—it was cold. With quick motion he raised her form. It was stiff, her jaw was set, blood-flecks were about the fair, sweet mouth. The mighty struggle was over. Zolu was dead!

Life and light for that moment left Dick Morris. When he came to there were kind, sympathetic, tear-stained faces above him.

Gradually his strength came back to him. But the blow had been a terrible one. To his dying day he would never recover fully from it.

Never, until death came, had he realized how much he cared for faithful, devoted Zolu. His heart seemed crushed. For weeks he lay between life and death, and only a rugged constitution saved him.

But he rallied, and finally was able to get upon his feet. He was a pitiable sight, though, being but a shadow of his former self.

That Zolu had died of a broken heart was beyond doubt. Angina pectoris, the professor called it, for the lips were covered with blood, and the position of the body indicated a dreadful spasm.

Of course it took Dick a long while to recover from the blow; but at length preparations were once more made, and the day for departure was fixed.

Before leaving Dick visited Zolu's grave. It was a most affecting sight for the others, and they were obliged to forcibly remove him to the yacht. Then an adieu was bid to King Barak and all, and, after having been for exactly two years and three months in the Antarctic seas, our adventurers set forth upon the homeward course.

As the days passed, and the yacht held her steady northward course, Dick rallied and regained much of his strength, and was soon able to be about with the others. But he was changed from the jolly, frolicsome youth of bygone days, being grave—almost sad.

It was six weeks before the key to the strait by which they had entered the inner sea was found by Captain Adams. It was luckily open, and the Eclipse sailed through and was once more in the outer Antarctic Ocean.

They forced their way onward, ever bearing north. And now the same calamity again overtook them. The needle of the compass varied, and they were puzzled how to set a course. However, the heavens being clear, Professor Hamilton with his best telescope gauged their position by certain heavenly bodies, and in this manner they were enabled to go on.

The spirits of all arose, though it was found necessary to continually dose with stimulants to overcome the dangerous lassitude incidental to the change of clime. One day a ship was sighted.

It drew nearer and a hail was given. The name of the steam sloop, Albert from New York, was given, and then a wild cry pealed from Bob's lips as he recognized a familiar form at the rail.

"My father! Thank Heaven!"

A few moments later, with tears streaming from his eyes, happy Colonel Singleton was holding his brave wandering boy to his breast and giving glad welcome to all.

Patient reader, why prolong this wearisome narrative? Let us indulge in a few explanatory remarks, and then bring it to a close.

Our boys had had enough of wild life for the while, and were glad to return to New York, where they were welcomed with a genuine ovation. The greatest scientists in the land sought council with Professor Hamilton, who immediately accepted a high salary as a member of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

The trip to the kingdom of ice is often discussed by the boys, but the subject of going there again is kept sacred. It is safe to assume that they would not care to undertake the feat again.

Next week's issue will contain "ROBINSON CRUSOE, JR." By Jas. C. Merritt.

CURRENT NEWS

Seventeen men under life sentences for murders escaped recently from the penitentiary at Santiago, Veragua Province, Panama, after killing a police lieutenant and a guard and severely wounding five other guards. Then they broke into the arsenal, stole a lot of rifles, revolvers and cartridges and ran amuck through the streets, shooting indiscriminately but only wounding one person, a woman. The convicts are now at large in the jungle.

Not content with devastating France with fire and sword, says the *Elclair*, the Germans are now ruining the fruit trees and vines in the invaded districts. It was recently stated that the Germans were reploughing fields where corn was planted because they had no expectation of being able to reap the harvest. The reported destruction of trees by stripping them of buds and new branches is regarded here as a plan to ruin French agricultural interests.

The past sealing season in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which closed May 1, was a failure owing to the difficulty of finding and reaching the herds in the unusually heavy ice, and entailed a loss of about \$250,000 upon the owners of vessels. Next year it is proposed to engage two aviators to visit the east coast and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, respectively, just before the opening of the season and locate the herds. If successful, this plan will save the large amount of time now lost by sealers in searching for their prey, and should add correspondingly to the profits.

The airman who located the 15-inch German gun that bombarded Dunkirk succeeded by only the narrowest margin in bringing information in. Flying at a height of 2,200 yards the biplane had gone about twelve miles behind the German lines. A storm of shrapnel burst around the machine; a shell carried away part of the tail and tore a large hole in the lower plane. The observer, however, had time to locate a deep ditch roofed over with concrete from which peeped the big gun that was sending half-ton shells into Dunkirk. The aviator was bleeding from a wound when he landed, but had the energy to make a comprehensive report. He said, "I am satisfied," and then died.

One of the interesting bits of war news brought by travelers on the Cunarder *Orduna*, which arrived recently, was that within the first three days of June two German submarines of a late type were destroyed at the entrance of the English Channel. This information is represented to come from an authoritative source. It has been the policy of the British Admiralty to make no announcements of the destruction of German submarines except when the capture of members of their crews has made secrecy impossible. It has been currently reported in London, however, that since the beginning of the warfare on merchant ships, and previous to the destruction of the two now mentioned, some twelve German submarines have come to grief.

A 25-story bank building in Birmingham, Ala., is the highest building in the South, and with the exception of a building in Seattle and one in Cincinnati, the highest west of New York. The height of this building, from the curb to the highest point of the roof, is 322 feet, and in addition to this, there is one full story under ground. Every known means for making the building fireproof has been employed. Not only is there no combustible material in the structure, but steel doors glazed with pressed plate glass have been installed between the elevator lobby and office corridors on each floor. These will be open at all times except in case of fire, when they close automatically, confining the fire to the point of origin and allowing full use of elevators and stairs. The building is located at the highest point of the business district and will therefore serve as a landmark for the surrounding country.

Although Mme. Sarah Bernhardt was the victim of several stage accidents before that which has had such a sad result, she has never been injured by any of the lions, tigresses and other ferocious pets that she has had at different times. When F. C. Philips called on Mme. Bernhardt to discuss the French production of "As in a Looking Glass," he was ushered by a Patagonian servant, nearly 7 feet high, into a drawing-room fitted in one corner with a cage full of young lions. "Presently the Patagonian left the room, returning with a great bowl of milk. To unfasten the cage was the work of an instant, and before I could fly the mad things were galloping all over the room, dancing around me, crouching at me as though meditating a spring at my throat, and then, to my unmistakable relief, dashing off to the end of the room, where the milk awaited them. Madame not appearing, I took the advantage of a favorable moment to place the door between myself and these creatures."

The J. G. Brill Company, of Philadelphia, manufacturer of cars and trucks, has received an order from the Russian Government for millions of dollars' worth of steel shells, according to a report from reliable sources. And coupled with that report is one to the effect that the Brill company is going to great expense installing machinery especially adapted for such work. Employees in the Brill shops say the company has been turning out big quantities of shrapnel for foreign distribution, and that Canadian representatives of the Russian Government are supervising the making of the shells. They also say that many trucks are being made for field kitchens, field hospital ambulances, ammunition wagons and other types of war-time conveyances. The reported expansion of the plant takes in the installation of a score of furnaces in which steel can be heated to a temperature of 2,000 degrees, each furnace to have a capacity of forty billets of steel. Bill's car business is said to have suffered through the widespread increase of jitneys.

Jumping Jack, the Boy Acrobat

—OR—

LEAPING INTO LUCK

By William Wade

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XVI (continued)

"Well, I should say," cried Jack, excitedly. "How can we get it out?"

At this Zeb laughed.

"That's easy enough," he declared. "Just give me the shovel."

And he proceeded to clean out the pocket. Many handfuls of sand were washed and the gold extracted. Finally the job was done.

Zeb examined the vicinity very closely, but he could see no other gold. It was safe to assume that this was the only pocket and the source of the gold found in the stream.

So the granules of yellow were all placed in a stout canvas bag. It was the first gold washing Jack had ever done.

He was much elated.

He already saw a fortune in his grasp. He thought of Brownville and how it would soon be possible for him to go back there again.

He pictured his reception by the good people of the village. There was no doubt in his mind that Beniah Brown would regard him in a different light.

So engrossed was Jack in these thoughts that he did not hear the rustle in the bushes, nor see two stalwart men emerge in the rear.

But Zeb heard and he turned his head. The old miner's lips curled with scorn, his eyes flashed and he cried in a contemptuous way:

"Spies!"

Jack turned and saw his reason therefor. It angered the boy athlete. The two newcomers were Sim Mason and Bob Crowell, the two prospectors.

There was a leering grin on Sim Mason's face.

"Hit luck, have ye?" he asked in his rasping voice. "Thought ye said there was no gold in this locality."

He bent his gaze upon Zeb. The old miner was very scornful and angry.

"What do you want here, Sim Mason?" he asked curtly.

"What do we want?" asked the fellow with a light chuckle. "We are not fools. We are going to follow the trail of gold. If there is gold in the run, we shall stake off a claim at once."

"And ye thought by shadowing us ye would make the find?" asked Zeb with contempt. "Is that so?"

"Well," stammered Mason, "in the diggin's you can't afford to let chances go by. We reckoned you were on the right scent."

"And you followed us," said Zeb, scathingly. "That is the work of a sneak and a coward. I ought to shoot you for dogging us."

Mason's eyes glittered. He measured Zeb a moment critically and then looked at Jack. But Pray read his

mind like a book and was ready. He met Mason's gaze full and fair.

"That's pretty strong talk!" said Mason in a thick voice. "Hevn't we as much right as ye?"

"In one sense you have, but it is the act of a sneak to spy on another and try to reap the benefit of his discovery," said Zeb, stoutly. "It shows that ye are dishonorable. But we found the pocket and got the gold. If ye want to carry the quest further, ye are at liberty to do so. But don't let me catch ye follerin' us agin!"

Mason seemed to ignore this threat and his eyes gleamed avariciously as he asked:

"So ye found the pocket, eh? How much did ye git out of it?"

"That is our affair!" retaliated Zeb.

With which he picked up the bag of gold dust and signalled Jack to follow him. They carried their tools back to the spot where they had first camped.

And here they rigged the litter and set out on their journey to White Park. Mason and Crowell remained in the woods.

For several miles Jack and Zeb kept up a rapid pace. Then they halted just under a high precipice. The trail here led over an intensely rocky region of hills.

"Twelve miles more, lad," said Zeb as he wiped his brow. "I reckon we can make it to-day."

"I think so," said Jack. "I feel good and fresh."

Zeb looked over his shoulder.

"I've got a sneakin' idea them critters might try something rash," he said. "But I suppose they will monkey around after another gold pocket first. That Mason is a bad chap."

"I agree with you, Zeb," said Jack. "You ought to have seen his eyes as they rested on the bag of gold."

"I know," chuckled Zeb. "I was right on to him."

"Well, we have come along safely so far."

"That's right, lad. It looks like as if we will get through," said Zeb with confidence. Louis Carillo was at Jones's when we stopped there. But he might have taken the other trail."

"Look here, Zeb," said Jack resolutely. "Tell me what he looks like, so that I may know him when I see him."

Zeb's mouth opened to reply, but no word fell from his lips. His face turned ashen pale and he stared straight ahead and pointed a trembling finger.

Jack gave a start and looked in the direction indicated.

In that moment something came hurtling through the air.

Like a bolt of death, it came and smote the old miner in the breast. Jack gave one horrified look.

It was a deadly knife sticking in old Zeb's body.

CHAPTER XVII.

RETRIBUTION.

Awful horror swept over Jack Wallace's being. He stood for a moment like one petrified.

He had caught a momentary glimpse of the thrower of the knife.

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

WORLD'S LARGEST SMELTER.

The largest smelting furnace in the world is being constructed in Allentown, Pa., by the Traylor Engineering Company, and the contract is in the nature of a war order. The plant makes a specialty of heavy machinery, and before the outbreak of hostilities had started work on an order from the Belgian Government for a large copper smelter for the Congo. The war interrupted proceedings. Recently at a conference of military and business men standing high in the ranks of the allies it was decided that the result of the war would be such that Germany would not realize its ambition to become possessor of the Congo. As a result the order for the furnace was changed and enlarged. The smelter will be 80 by 105 feet and 144 feet high. Upward of 400 men are employed at the plant and several hundred more men are needed, chiefly skilled mechanics. The order amounts to several million dollars' worth of machinery, with prospects of more.

BALL PLAYERS FAIL TO HIT SIGN.

The big 40-foot sign which C. T. Silver has at the Polo Grounds, New York, has not been hit with a fly ball from the home plate as yet. There has been a close call on several occasions, and in one instance the sign was saved by a miraculous catch by an outfielder.

When the ball season opened Mr. Silver offered a new Overland car to the first New York player who in a championship game hit the sign with a fly ball. At the time there was a difference of opinion as to the ease with which it could be hit. Many of the baseball scribes went so far as to say it could be hit in every game, and suggested that the sign should be hit two or three times by the same player, or that some particular part of the sign should be hit.

The distance from the home plate is 594 feet, however, and Mr. Silver did not want to put too great a handicap on the earning of the car, so his offer took in the entire 40-foot sign.

To show his sporting blood he has had the wording of the sign changed and from now on every player from a visiting team in a championship game is included in the offer.

The New York players may have been inclined to take it easy till now, as they alone had a chance for the car, but now that all players have been included by the Overland distributor, they will put forth some strenuous efforts to win out.

NEW GOLD COINS.

The first specimens of the series of special gold coins struck by the San Francisco Mint for the Panama-Pacific Exposition were received recently by Thomas L. Elder, a numismatist of New York. They are in four denominations—50 cents, \$1, \$2.50 and \$50.

The gold dollar was designed by Charles Keck of New York, and the dies cut here by the Medallie Art Com-

pany. The obverse bears the head of a laborer in a cap, symbolizing the labor that erected the exposition buildings, while on the reverse are engraved two plunging dolphins, representing the meeting of the oceans. The issue of gold dollars is limited to 25,000. They are selling at the exposition for \$2 a piece or six for \$10.

The gold half-dollar, which was designed by Charles E. Barber of the Philadelphia Mint, has a figure of Liberty on one side and an eagle and shield on the other. The \$2.50 piece is also designed by Barber. Both of these sell at double their face value.

There are two issues of the \$50 coins, each designed by Robert Aitken, of New York, who has important sculptural works at the exposition. One of these is octagonal and the other round. This is the largest gold coin ever authorized by this Government, and is the largest denomination now being circulated by any Government. The issue is limited to 1,500 coins.

The premiums on the sale of the coins in San Francisco goes to the treasury of the exposition.

ODD MARRIAGE COSTUMES.

In Siam all the guests must bring presents.

Presents are exchanged between the bride and bridegroom on the evening before an Armenian wedding.

Swedish brides used to receive from their friends a pig, sheep, or cow, and from the bridegroom a colt, dog, cat or goose.

The custom of sticking coins on the bridegroom's forehead is common to several Eastern races, among others to the Turcomans and Moors of West Barbary.

Among the early Germans money was given to the bride's relatives on the wedding day, but this usage was not followed if the marriage happened to be an unequal one.

Every guest at a Norwegian wedding used to bring the bride a present. In many parts a keg of butter was the usual gift, and if the marriage took place in the winter, salted or frozen meat was offered.

With modern Arabians the bridegroom makes the bride presents, which are sent a day or two before the nuptials. As soon as the bride reaches the bridegroom's house she makes him presents of household furniture, a spear and a tent.

In Persia the bridegroom is obliged to give a certain sum of money in addition to other presents. If he is in moderate circumstances he gives his bride two completedresses, a ring and a mirror. He also supplies the furniture, carpets, mats, culinary utensils and other necessities for their home.

With the Celestials the family of the bridegroom make presents to the family of the bride of various articles a few days before the day fixed for the marriage. The presents generally consist of food, a cock and hen, the leg and foot of a pig, the leg of a goat, eight small cakes of bread, eight torches, three pairs of large red candles, a quantity of vermicelli and several bunches of firecrackers.

FROM ALL POINTS

Japan and China are countries whose great populations have existed and increased without one of the articles of diet that to Americans seems an elementary food—milk. There is practically no production of milk in either of these countries, almost the only supply being imported from foreign nations in the form of condensed milk in cans.

One of the longest railroad tunnels on the American continent is now under construction by the Canadian Pacific railway in the Selkirk Range of British Columbia. The tunnel, to be known as the Rogers Pass Tunnel, will be five miles long, and will cost \$10,000,000. The famous Hoosac Tunnel is four and three-quarters miles in length. The new tunnel, which is 29 feet wide and 23 feet high, will shorten the route four miles.

Benjamin Prether, of Avon, Ind., is a strong temperance man, but that did not prevent one of his favorite milch cows from getting drunk. It was a comical sight. Prether noticed the animal prancing around in the barn lot, doing all sorts of antics, and could not imagine what was the matter. He sent for a veterinarian, who said the cow was drunk. It was learned that she had been where she could get at a quantity of fermented corn.

The direct route from Buenos Aires to Asuncion, Paraguay, recently opened by the Central Cordoba railway, is a model of modern railway service. The restaurant cars, besides being ornate, have palms and plants, electric lights in artistic fixtures, and, an innovation in railroading, a piano in each car, so that the passengers may enjoy music while dining. The same line is also equipped with private family cars, and on some of these pianos are installed, fitted with mechanical piano players, so that any member of the family may perform to while away the tedium of a long journey.

The married women of the Baralong tribe in Africa wear hats that are designed not only for ornament but for utility. These women do the heavy work of the tribe. As the men object to doing the work of nurse maid, it is necessary for the mothers to take their children with them to the fields where they labor. South African women are capable of carrying loads on their heads with perfect security, and when the baby goes with its mother it is carried in this basket-like hat. The hat is lined with the hairy part of an animal skin and the baby is as comfortable as any civilized baby in its modern bassinet or crib.

Clifton A. Davis is a passenger engineer on the Northwestern railroad. He resides just out of St. Charles, Ill., and his residence is within a stone's throw of the tracks. Every morning, as he approaches the house, he sounds a long blast of the whistle, and his wife goes to the door and waves her hand at him. The usual whistle was sounded the

other morning. Mrs. Davis hurried to the door in time to see the engine jump the track and turn over in the ditch. She fainted. Members of the train crew and passengers pulled Davis from under the engine unharmed. The train was derailed and passengers shaken up, but none was injured.

An experiment conducted by the military authorities in Paris recently in an effort to find a way of disposing of bodies in haste, thus avoiding the epidemic that it is feared will follow the leaving of vast numbers of dead on the battlefields, is described by *Le Temps*. Directed by Dr. Lucien Dumont, a special commission filled two trenches with coffins containing bodies drenched with colloidal tar, covered them with wood, and applied a match at 9:30 a. m. Five hours later only ashes remained and no unpleasant odor was noticeable. *Le Temps* says this experiment shows that incineration may be practiced on any battlefield without special apparatus.

It is said that the largest gold coin now in circulation is the gold ingot, or "lool," of Anam, a French colony in Eastern Asia. It is a flat, round gold piece, and on it is written in Indian ink its value, which is about forty-five pounds. The next sized coin to this valuable but extremely awkward one is the "obang," of Japan, which is worth about ten pounds, and next comes the "benda," of Ashantee, which represents a value of about nine pounds. The California fifty-dollar gold piece is worth about the same as the "benda." The heaviest silver coin in the world also belongs to Anam, where the silver ingot is worth about three pounds; then comes the Chinese "tael," and then the Austrian double thaler.

Ontario has a gross area of 407,262 square miles, which is more than six times the total area of the six New England States. A large part of this vast territory, particularly in northern or New Ontario, has not yet been fully explored, and a considerable proportion of it is unfit for permanent settlement, especially in the mountain districts and the fur-producing regions of the north and northwest. The forest area of more than 100,000 square miles, exclusive of Patricia, abounds in valuable timber and pulp wood. The pine timber on forest reserves is estimated at 7,000,000,000, on licensed lands at 7,000,000,000 and on unlicensed territory at 13,500,000,000 feet board measure, and the pulp wood still standing on Crown lands at from 300,000,000 to 400,000,000 cords, not including the recently added district of Patricia, 146,400 square miles, on which there is a large amount of timber and pulp wood. The policy of the Government is to conserve its lands and forests, as well as its mines and water powers, for the benefit of the public. The title to 90 per cent. of the 234,163,030 acres of land in the province is still vested in the Crown, and only 6 per cent. of this vast area is under cultivation.

HURRICANE HAL

— OR —

THE BOY WHO WAS BORN AT SEA

By J. P. Richards

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XIII.

PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE.

"She changed clothes with me, threw her mantilla over my head, and told me to go out fearlessly and not be alarmed. No one would follow me, she said, nor even suspect me. They did not, and I was hurrying on to the house on the bluff when I saw you."

"That girl is a treasure," said Hal; "but I fear that Trennell will do her an injury when he discovers how she has allowed his prisoner to escape. I fear that he will kill her. He must not; she must leave him."

"I urged her to do so," said Mary, as they hurried on, "but she said she could not. If the pirates saw me they would prevent my going, but in her dress they would suspect nothing, and would allow me to pass."

"But would she not consent to leave him later?"

"No. I told her to keep the mantilla and wear it over my dress after I had gone, so that it would seem as if she had returned and were going out again, but she would not."

"I am afraid that brute will kill her," said Hal sadly; "but I don't believe any of us could persuade her to leave him."

They shortly reached the house on the bluff, where they found Swivel keeping guard, the captain, Tom, and old Joe having gone in search of the missing ones.

"The captain said to raise the flag if you came back before he did," said the man, "and I'm glad to do it. He'll feel all right when he sees the old Stars and Stripes floating from the bluff."

The flag was soon flying, and in fifteen minutes the three men came hurrying back to the house.

The captain was overjoyed to see Mary, and Tom Clews was equally delighted to welcome Hal, for whom he had all a father's affection, although there was not such a great difference in their ages.

Hal and Mary told their stories, and then the captain said:

"I had an idea that Trennell had kidnaped you both, and I went to his hut and charged him with it. He said that you were dead, and that he was glad of it, but that he knew nothing of my daughter."

"Whereupon I politely told him that he was a liar," growled Joe, "an' offered to cut him up in chunks an' feed him to the sharks for half a dollar, for I knowed that the old man's gal was there, as I had seen her dress."

"Then Anita came out," said Tom, carrying on the story, "and told us that Mary was safe. Trennell was in a rage, and threatened the girl, but we told him that if he harmed her we would blow up his hut and throw him and his mates into the sea."

"Then we see the flag a-flyin' from the staff," added

Joe, "an' we knowed that somebody had come back, though we didn't expect to find you both. I've been on the ocean nigh on to forty year, but I never seen a welcomer sight than that 'ere old flag a-flyin' from the bluff."

"Do you think Trennell will harm the girl for her share in Mary's escape?" asked Hal. "If I thought so I would go back there now and bring her here."

"He is too big a coward to do it," said Tom. "If he thought he would not suffer he is craven enough to do so, but he fears the consequences to himself. He knows that we outnumber him, and he knows, too, that we will keep our word."

They had begun to gather materials for the boat, and now, the rainy season being at hand, they decided to erect a shed close to the house and forming a part of it, in which the boat-building could go on uninterrupted during the prevalence of the rains.

They cut down trees enough that were suitable for this purpose, drove them in the ground about two feet apart, and filled the intervening spaces with twigs and short branches twined in and out.

They covered the sloping roof with a thatch of reeds and coarse grass which shed the rain so well that the place was always dry and comfortable no matter how hard it rained.

Armed with a knife, to defend himself against sharks, Hal swam out to the wreck and succeeded in getting off considerable copper from the bottom, which would be used on the new boat.

Then the boy, with the assistance of Tom, Joe and Swivel, cut a hole in the bottom with axes, and then sawed out several lengths of timber to serve for the keel and frame of the boat.

It was possible to get into the hold a certain distance and remove lighter portions of the cargo and two casks of water, the latter not being such a necessity now that there was so much rain, but being still most desirable, as the casks themselves could be used for making water-tight compartments.

For more than a month they worked constantly at the boat, going out only at times when the rain was light, so as to obtain exercise and fresh air and yet not delay the work.

They cut through the bottom under the after cabin and took out sailcloth, rope, canned provisions and other things which had not been affected by the salt water, and which would be most useful to them.

Cutting into the hull raised the level of the water in it, and after a time they could not go below, but as they had taken out so much, this was not so greatly to be regretted as it might have been.

At times the rain was so violent that they were confined indoors entirely; and then the work progressed more rapidly.

There were fir trees on the island, and from these pitch was made with which to make the seams tighter, there being also plenty of oakum to serve the same purpose.

At times they saw Trennell and one or another of his companions, but usually they had little to say to them, and only answered when addressed by them, and then only briefly.

(To be continued)

INTERESTING TOPICS

The home run made by Hans Wagner, the veteran short-stop, in the second inning of the thirteen-inning contest with Philadelphia at Forbes Field, Pittsburgh, Pa., was the 100th of his career. It also brought his total number of hits to 3,131. Wagner made his first home run in the major league while with Louisville, of the National League, in 1897.

Louis Levitt and Isidor Rendelman, of New York City, provide in a patent No. 1,139,780 means for closing and clasp ing a milk bottle neck and a chain connected with the clasp and engaging under a door so that when the bottle is once secured it cannot be released until the door is opened. Something like this is needed when the milkman is ordered to leave milk at the door.

Instead of Charles Hardisty, of Evansville, Ind., answering the charge of assault and battery with intent to kill in the Circuit Court recently, his aged father appeared in his place and pleaded guilty to the charge of assault and battery and was fined \$100 and costs. Charles Hardisty had disappeared and the father was on his bond for \$200 and by pleading guilty for the son he saved \$100.

Hugh McGinty claims the bees he bought from H. H. Ames, of Los Angeles, were a worthless lot—wouldn't work—and when they did work made mighty poor honey; therefore he wants his money back. To collect the same he filed suit in the Superior Court for the revision of the contract. He alleged he purchased an interest in Ames' bee ranch in Baldwin Park for \$550 and paid down \$200.

Edward Dombroskey, a five-year-old fisherman of Gheen, Minn., was pulled into the lake near here when he tried to land a ten-and-a-half-pound pickerel he had caught. The little fellow put up a strenuous tussle with the big fish and after being pulled into the water held onto the pole. The boy's father, who was in the boat with him at the time, pulled him out of the water and helped him to land the fish.

The total area of China is estimated at 4,278,352 square miles. A census of the kind taken in Western nations has never been attempted in China, and the nearest approach to a reliable estimate is probably the census of households (not individuals) taken by the Chinese Ministry of Interior in 1910. Assuming 5.5 persons to a household, which, by a test census in various parts of the country, was found to be a fair average, the population totaled 331,000,000, including 1,500,000 as the probable population of Tibet.

A German patent has been issued to a scientist of Berlin for a special salt composition which behaves like ice under skates, sleighs and skis. Demonstrated on a rink in Berlin, scarcely any one of the numerous visitors who ventured upon the smooth surface was aware of the fact that it was

salt and not ice upon which he was enjoying himself. The composition of the salt is at present a trade secret, but the preparation is not affected by ordinary temperatures, and is melted and poured into blocks, which are combined so that any size smooth surface may be obtained. Under the action of skate blades, the composition acts like ice, and the feathery powder worn from the surface is swept off like snow, and can be used over and over again by melting it.

Fifty-one years ago Federal troops converted to their use personal property belonging to a citizen at Tipton, Moniteau County, Mo., conducting a livery stable. This property consisted of mules, horses, etc. After his death his daughter, Mrs. Mary Christopher, of Boonville, Mo., began the prosecution of a claim against the Government of the United States to recover damage for confiscation of her father's property. Twelve years ago Attorney C. W. Journey took the matter in hand and worked unceasingly in behalf of the complainant. Recently W. W. Trigg, appointed administrator, received a Government voucher for \$10,000, what was left of the claim of \$12,500. The attorneys in the case were allowed \$2,500 by the Government for their services.

The elimination of weeds along the public highways is a part of the work of the "road improvement," according to Supt. Jones of the Wayne County Department of Highways, Indiana, and accordingly he will begin shortly to cut weeds all over the county. Prisoners from the county jail will be used in this work, as they have been during the spring in road repair work. The county now has an automobile truck used for the transportation of prisoners to various parts of the county. The experiment of working prisoners on the roads was undertaken with some misgivings by citizens, but now, according to county officers, the only objection comes from the prisoners themselves, who prefer, in most cases, to be permitted to spend their time in idleness at the jail.

Members of the crew of the launch Four Brothers, engaged in fishing in the vicinity of Wine Island, one of the Timbalier group, off the gulf coast of Terrebonne Parish, La., found a half-pint bottle, containing wine, which frequenters of the locality believe is a relic of the cargo of a ship wrecked there in 1856. Wine Island derived its name from this occurrence. The ship, so the story goes, carried a cargo of wine from France and was blown ashore and wrecked on this bit of land, which then became known as Wine Island. The bottle contained what appears to be one-third of its original contents. Of course it is in a bad state, although retaining to some extent the color of wine. The cork stopper was intact, but there were no paper or metal labels, these having been washed or eaten off by the action of the water. The bottle was buried in the sand, but became exposed partly by the wave wash and then was dug up by the discoverers.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

LIVES IN TWO COUNTIES.

After moving his bedroom across the hall so he will sleep in Cabell County instead of Wayne County, James A. Hughes, of near Huntington, W. Va., has announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination for Congressman from the new Fourth District.

Mr. Hughes recently completed fourteen years of service in Congress, having represented the Fifth District ever since it was created. Foreseeing a possible change in the districts, he built his home with the county line running through his hallway.

Heretofore his parlor has been in Cabell, while he slept in Wayne County, in the Fifth Congressional District. But the Legislature recently redistricted the State, putting Cabell County into the Fourth District, in which Mr. Hughes preferred to run. Consequently he shoved his parlor into Wayne and his sleeping-room into Cabell to make him eligible to run in the Fourth District.

ODD BELIEFS.

The German mother says that should she lose the heel of her shoe one of her children will die before the year is out.

The Scotch lassie believes that should she by accident drop her new shoes before they have been worn, they will surely lead her into trouble.

It is said that old maids believe that when their shoes come untied, and keep coming untied, it is true their sweethearts are talking and thinking about them.

The sweetheart, when on his way to see his lady love, should he stub his right toe he will surely be welcome, but if he stubs his left he may know that he is not wanted.

It is said that if old shoes are burned, snakes will squirm away from the place, while to keep old shoes that are past wearing about the place will surely bring good luck.

Should you meet a person whose shoes are "worn on the toes" you may put it down as a certainty that "he spends as he goes," and on the same authority it is said that the girl that has her shoes "worn on the side" is surely fated to be a "rich man's bride."

FOUND TIED IN A MINE.

James H. Worth, a wealthy mine operator of Joplin and Indianapolis, owes his life to the high price of zinc. Held prisoner in an abandoned zinc mine, he had been left to perish, and doubtless would have done so had not two prospectors, Roy Cardwell and Sam Huston, gone into the old mine and discovered Worth, who had been in the drift five days. He was unconscious, but was soon revived. The high price of ore caused the prospectors to enter the drift in the hope of finding zinc overlooked by former operators.

Worth says he was accosted at a Joplin hotel by a stranger who said he was desirous of looking at mining land. The stranger introduced his business partner. Worth

does not remember the names of the men, but says they drove with him to the abandoned mine. In a remote drift, he says, he was bound, gagged and tied to a piece of mine timber. The kidnapers attached a long fuse to one of his feet and another to the end of a box containing dynamite. The fuse was lighted, and one man said:

"You will reach the dynamite in twelve hours, and if the rats don't get you first this will finish the job."

The rescuers discovered that the men in walking about had accidentally cut the fuse.

QUEER HAPPENINGS.

Abraham Golda, of Jersey City, fined \$10 for kissing Mrs. Mathilda M. Gaunt twice.

John Citron, of Bayonne, N. J., drops three stories, lands on feet—and resumes painting.

Steel companies at Sharon, Pa., order workmen to shave because whiskers carry microbes and may infect drinking cups.

Thomas Fallon, money broker, Jersey City, stricken with acute colic, but doctors operate, recovering three diamonds.

Patrolman Jacob Sieben, Jersey City, fined six days' pay for being asleep on post under bower of roses in greenhouse.

Leo Joseph, thirty-five, No. 205 Macon street, Brooklyn, well dressed, sentenced to five months in workhouse as beggar.

Fire in home of William R. Schneibel, Paterson, N. J., sets off cartridges and neighbor's dog rouses his owners, who call firemen.

Miss Elizabeth Unberfeld, of Peekskill, N. Y., fractured her arm while showing friends gymnastics she had seen Billy Sunday do.

Jimmy Kelly, fourteen years, No. 158 Kent street, Brooklyn, missing two days, found in cellar hiding from fear of punishment.

Virgie Carpenterie, ten years, Long Island City, gets \$1,500 verdict against candy company at whose bonfire child was badly burned.

Harry McMillan, former cashier of Morrow County National Bank at Mount Gilead, Ohio, admits embezzling \$23,000. Sentenced to six years.

James Hooper, digging in ruins of home of Thomas Upp, author, at Tompkins Corners, N. Y., finds \$2,200 in gold—a numismatic collection.

Five-year-old Thomas Tiernan, of 449 West Fifty-sixth street, New York, died in his father's arms while being carried to Roosevelt Hospital after a fall.

Benjamin Evans, twenty-eight years old, told court he preferred to return to the French trenches to living with his wife at No. 529 Grand avenue, Brooklyn.

William Nickless, twenty years, after high life at Coney Island on \$390, alleged to have been stolen from his father, a druggist, gives self up with 15 cents left.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JULY 14, 1915.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Automobile owners will be interested in a device just patented by Armin G. Helfer of New York, which show the highest speed at which a car has traveled during its trip. An extra pointer is provided on the speedometer, which moves up with the regular indicating hand, but which cannot be moved backward without the aid of a key. This may help to reduce the high cost of speeding.

The boring insects—teredos—which cause enormous damage in the destruction of piles used in the construction of wharves in the north Pacific coast ports have hitherto successfully defied all attempts to eradicate them. A new method of destroying teredos is being tried in Seattle, where electric currents are turned into the piles infested with these insects. If successful, this will mean the saving of immense sums to individuals and companies maintaining docks and wharves on the coast.

Elaborate plans for defending positions subject to gas attack are being pushed to competition by British war office experts. For artillerymen and machine-gun men, suits of "armor" are being modeled after those worn by divers or colliery firefighters. For infantrymen the crude respirators first supplied are being replaced by hoods. A flap covers the face, mica windows being inserted to protect the eyes. A chew of tobacco in time has saved many a soldier's life. "We thought we would try it," said one. "Now, when we notice the gas we just take a chew of tobacco."

At Czuchow, in the coal field of Upper Silesia, is the deepest well in the world. It has reached a depth of over 7,348 feet, a trifle under a mile and a half below the surface. America has three wells ranking next in order. That near McDonald, Pa., some ten miles southeast of Pittsburgh, is 6,860 feet deep; one in Putnam Heights, Conn., is 6,004 feet deep, and one now being bored at Derrick City, Pa., has reached the depth of 5,820 feet. Although each of these wells is over a mile in depth, little that is new in geologic formation has been learned from the borings, as owing to the dip of the strata many comparatively shallow wells have touched the underlying rock beds of very old formations.

One of the most practical junkets that Uncle Sam has ever sponsored is the specially fitted refrigerator car that has been started around the country to demonstrate proper methods of handling eggs and poultry for shipment. The car is a complete refrigerating laboratory, which carries its own engine to operate the cooling apparatus. It is divided into two rooms. The first is of a temperature slightly below normal, for the gradual cooling of the poultry before it is placed in the other room, which is the refrigerator. Experts from the Department of Agriculture make the demonstrations with poultry and eggs supplied by the local dealers. The scientific candling of eggs and their skillful packing for long shipment are also demonstrated.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Employer—You are too slow about your work. Office Boy (cheerfully)—Oh, well; what I don't do to-day I kin do to-morrer.

Richard—Are those good apples on your trees? Robert—We don't know; our neighbors' two boys never let any of them get ripe.

She—You don't hear the men use the word "obey" in the wedding ceremony. He—No; that's so. But they usually have to, all right.

Mrs. Church—Did your husband enjoy the minstrels last night? Mrs. Gotham—No, not a bit. You see, he didn't see the jokes until this morning.

"He doesn't know anything." "Oh, you do him an injustice." "I do?" "Certainly. He knows just what kind of a hat to wear with any particular kind of a coat."

Mother—Why did you say that you did not take the cake when you did? Child—The other day you said that the truth was not to be spoken at all times, and I remembered it.

"Butterby is awfully absent-minded." "What is his latest?" "He was driving a nail and hammered his thumb. He howled and put the nail in his mouth, and tried to fling his thumb on the floor."

"Won't you be glad, Tommy, when your baby brother is as big as you are now?" asked the caller. "You bet I will," replied Tommy. "Then he'll be licked fur some o' the things that I git licked fur now."

"So you are an advocate of vegetarianism?" "Yes?" "For what reason?" "If I can persuade everybody else to live on vegetables perhaps eggs and beef will become cheap enough for me to have all I want of them."

Wealthy Resident—Why don't you call for more firemen, chief? Chief of Volunteer Firemen—Well, you see, we get only one keg of beer for putting out a fire, and the fewer there are of us the more beer we shall have to drink.

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

ODD TRAPS FOR ANIMALS.

That almost unerring instinct which carries animals through grave dangers has led in many instances in the Midway and Sunset oil fields of California to their undoing, asserts the Scientific American. Chief among such victims are rabbits and water fowl.

A jackrabbit and a cottontail find a nice round, smooth hole. There are many such in the oil fields, where oil piping is a necessity for the transportation of oil to the refineries. The rabbits decide to set up housekeeping there. The cottontail desires a permanent home, and the jackrabbit wants a refuge safe from malevolent man.

Soon they discover their habitat is being moved. No doubt they are frightened, but they instinctively stay within their retreat. One end of the hole is closed. Even then they do not leave. Soon the other end of the hole is darkened. Then it is darkness eternal for the furry pair.

Some time later it is discovered that a newly-laid oil pipe line is choked. After great labor the line is dis-jointed and the remains of many rabbits removed. Thousands of rabbits have been thus exterminated in the oil fields.

The death rate among water fowl is even greater. Again, as with the rabbit, instinct leads them to certain destruction. Every little lake of oil in the vicinity of a gusher is a trap for the unthinking birds. At twilight and dawn these tar-colored lakes appear as bodies of water to the deluded fowl.

TO ENLIST BOY SCOUTS.

Boy scouts are the latest to be called on in the organization of means to meet the fire perils when Zeppelins revisit London. It is recognized that it is only a question of time when the air monsters again will fly over London and drop bombs.

In the northeast section, above which the Zeppelins flew, although this is not as yet printed in London, scouts are to be used to call attention to explosives and insecure roofs. They are to report shaken chimneys and broken cables and to guard but not handle unexploded bombs. They are to act as messengers for the police and to help the Fire Brigade and the police maintain fire lines. The Rev. Everard Digby is organizing them.

In the first month of the war, boy scouts were of particular service to American tourists who were stranded. They acted as messengers and were used as pilots to escort women strangers in the city.

Some of the boys are being instructed to take the places of train employees, if need be. Others are being trained to find and shut off the gas supply in private and public buildings. They are being instructed in finding electric switchboards and shutting off the current. They have also been instructed in the construction and use of fire extinguishers.

Some of the boys are being taught the construction of

frame dwellings so that they may more easily fight a partition or a wall fire. Others have drawn up lists of surgeons, doctors and nurses and hospitals near their homes so that they may summon them quickly in case of an emergency.

TO CLIMB PIKE'S PEAK BY MOTOR-BUS.

Climbing above the clouds to the top of America's most famous mountain will be the sensation afforded to tourists this summer by a new motor-bus line running from Colorado Springs to the summit of Pike's Peak. The buses will be operated in competition with the old cog railway a new highway having been built from Cascade to the peak. For this service, which was inaugurated on July 15, the White Company of Cleveland is building twelve twelve-passenger motor-buses and three seven-passenger touring cars.

The new highway is seventeen miles long and twenty feet wide, with no grades exceeding 10 per cent. At this summit the road attains an elevation of 14,109 feet, the highest highway in North America. Only one other road on this hemisphere exceeds its altitude, and that road, crossing the Andes Mountains in Bolivia at an elevation of 17,000 feet, is also the route of a White bus line.

The Pike's Peak highway is said to be a masterpiece of mountain road engineering. It is constructed on the safety-first principle, with wide turn-outs and view stations at many places en route. Automobile supply stations will be located at convenient points. The road will be open to all kinds of motor vehicles and certificates will be issued at the summit to all who make the ascent in their own cars. Round trips can be made easily in five hours, and the schedules of the buses include trips at sunset, sunrise and moonlight.

The route from Colorado Springs is by way of the Garden of the Gods, where a stop is made to view the gigantic rocks seared and seamed by the storms of ages, through Manitou and up historic Ute Pass to Cascade, twelve miles from Colorado Springs. From Cascade the Pike's Peak Auto Highway, smooth as a pavement, winds through the Pike national forest. Gradually the road unfolds a magnificent panoramic view of the snow-capped Rockies, crosses the timber line and climbs the backbone of the Rampart Range. Lover's Leap, 2,000 feet straight down, is passed.

On and upward the cars will climb, turning out occasionally to a view of the matchless scenery. They stop at the brink of the Bottomless Pit, giving passengers a chance to look down into that tremendous depth which dazes the senses. Eight thousand feet below is Colorado Springs, whose streets and avenues appear as pin scratches on the great plain. Fifty miles south is Pueblo, and still further away Trinidad is seen against the dim outline of the New Mexican Mountains. To the westward there are a hundred giant peaks of the Rockies capped with perpetual snow. Far to the north the golden dome of Colorado's State capitol appears on the horizon.

TRICK MATCHES.



Consist of a Swedish safety box, filled with matches, which will not light. Just the thing to cure the match borrowing habit. Price, 5c., postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.

The puzzle is to separate the one star from the linked star and crescent without using force. Price by mail, postpaid 10c.; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

WINDOW SMASHERS.



The greatest sensation, just from Paris. A most wonderful effect of a smashing, breaking, falling pane or glass. It will electrify everybody. When you come home, slam the door shut and at the same time throw the discs to the floor. Every pane of glass in the house will at once seem to have been shattered. Price, by mail, postpaid, 35c., a set of six plates.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

TRICK CARD CASE



A simple looking case like those containing an ordinary pack of playing cards. But the top card is only a dummy. Hidden inside the seeming pack is an ingenious mechanism; when you pull out the pack a trigger is released and explodes a cap with a loud report. Perfectly harmless and yet a source of no end of fun.

Price, 25c. each, by mail, postpaid. FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

THE LITTLE GEM TELEPHONE.



The transmitter in this telephone is made from the best imported parchment; with ordinary use will last a long time; can be made in any length by adding cord; the only real telephone for the

money; each one put up in a neat box; fully illustrated, with full directions how to use them. Price, 12c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE CANADIAN WONDER CARD TRICK.



Astonishing, wonderful, and perplexing! Have you seen them? Any child can work them, and yet, what they do is so amusing that the sharpest people on earth are fooled. We cannot tell you what they do, or others would get next and spoil the fun. Just get a set and read the directions. The results will startle your friends and utterly mystify them. A genuine good thing if you wish to have no end of amusement.

Price by mail, 10c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

TANGO TOP



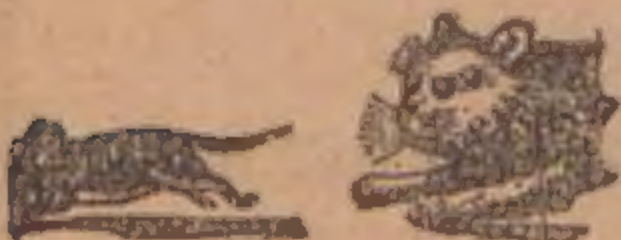
A brand new novelty. More fun than a circus. You spin the post with your fingers, and the snake tangoes all around the top of the circular metal box, without falling off, although it is not fastened in any way.

When the post stops spinning, the snake drops from the lid. What is the secret of its great attraction to the post? The marvel of the age.

Price, 10c. each, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE AUTOMATIC RUNNING MOUSE



This mouse is so nearly a perfect imitation of the live animal as to not only deceive the ladies, but to even deceive the cat. Inside each mouse is a set of clock work which you wind up with a key, then place the mouse on the floor and it will run rapidly in every direction in a circle across the floor backward and forward as if to get away. Suddenly set it agoing in a room where there are ladies, and you will have the fun of hearing them scream and jump upon the chairs to escape the little rodent. This mechanical mouse is well worth 50c., but we will sell it for 30c., and send it by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

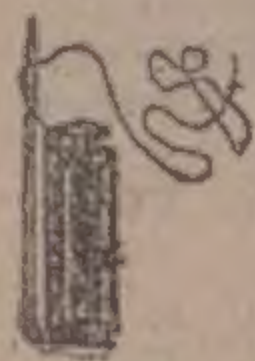
PIN MOUSE.



It is made of cast metal and has the exact color, shape and size of a live mouse. Pinned on your or somebody else's clothes, will have a startling effect upon the spectators. The screaming fun had by this little novelty, especially in the presence of ladies, is more than can be imagined. If a cat happens to be there, there's no other fun to be compared with it.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

RAVELLING JOKE.



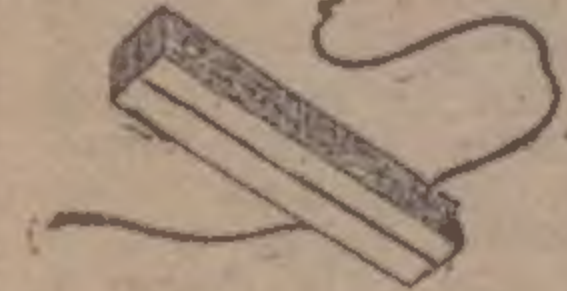
Yards upon yards of laughs. Don't miss it! Everyone falls for this one. It consists of a nice little bobbin around which is wound a spool of thread. You pin the bobbin under the lapel of your coat, and pull the end of the thread through your button hole, then watch your friends try to pick the piece of thread off your coat. Enough said! Get one! Price, 12c. each, by mail. Postage stamps taken same as money. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

IMITATION CUT FINGER.



A cardboard finger, carefully bandaged with linen, and the side and end are blood-stained. When you slip it on your finger and show it to your friends, just give a groan or two, nu se it up, and pull a look of pain. You will get nothing but sympathy until you give them the laugh. Then duck! Price, 10c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

STRING PUZZLE



This puzzle is a wonder. It consists of two pieces of wood. A hole is bored through the upper end of both. A red string passes through the holes. Take a knife, insert it between the wooden blocks and cut upwards. You separate the pieces of wood, and the string is apparently cut in two. Close the blocks together, seize an end of the string, and you can pull the entire cord through the holes, absolutely—not cut. Very mystifying.

Price, 12c. each, by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These Hliputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK



With this trick you barrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, post-paid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

SPRING TOPS



Something new for the boys. A top you can spin without a string. This is a decided novelty. It is of large size, made of brass, and has a heavy balance rim. The shank contains a powerful spring and has an outer casing. The top of the shank has a milled edge for winding it up. When wound, you merely lift the outer casing, and the top spins at such a rapid speed that the balance rim keeps it going a long time. Without doubt the handsomest and best top on the market.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

TOBACCO HABIT You can conquer it easily in 5 days, improve your health, prolong your life. No more stomach trouble, no foul breath, no heart weakness. Regain manly vigor, calm nerves, clear eyes and superior mental strength. Whether you chew or smoke pipe, cigarettes, cigars, get my interesting Tobacco Book. Worth its weight in gold. Mailed free. E. J. WOODS. 228 H Station E. New York, N. Y.

GREENBACKS

Pack of \$1,000 Stage Bills, 10c; 3 packs, 25c. Send for a pack and show the boys what a WAD you carry. C. A. NICHOLS, JR., Box 90, Chili, N. Y.

Asthma

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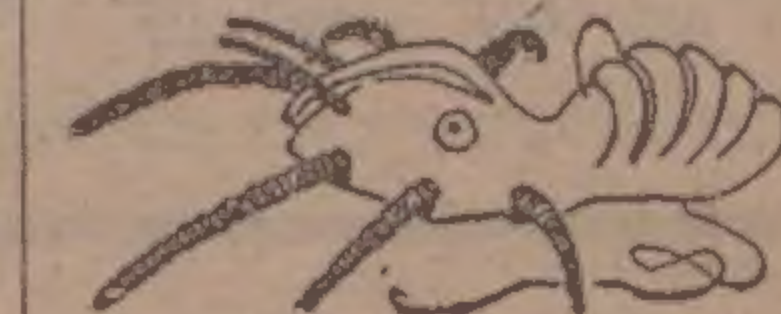
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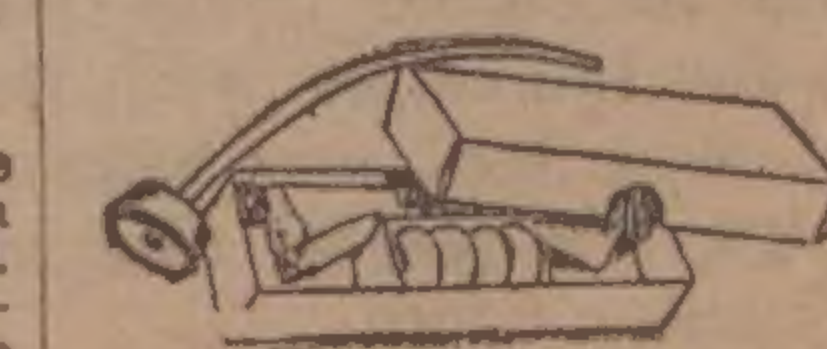
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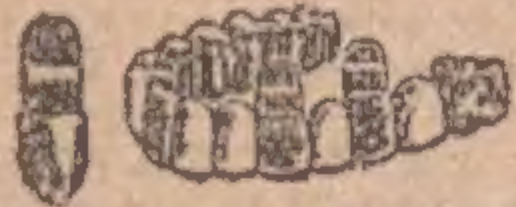
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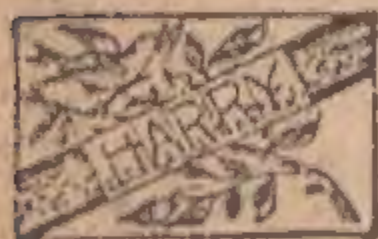
Gold plated tooth, shape made so that it will fit any tooth. Price, 5c., postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MARBLE VASE.

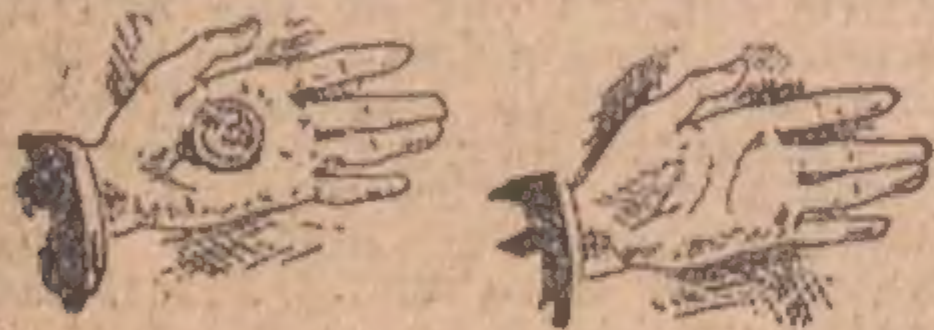


A clever and puzzling effect, easy to do; the apparatus can be minutely examined. Effect: A marble can be made to pass from the hand into the closed vase, which a moment before was shown empty. This is a beautiful enamel'd turned wood vase. Price, 20c. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

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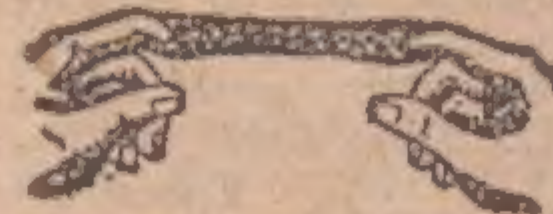


This pencil is made up in handsome style and looks so inviting that every one will want to look at it. The natural thing to do is to write with it, and just as soon as your friend tries to write, the entire inside of the pencil flies back like a jumping jack, and "Mr. Nosy" will be frightened stiff. It is one of our best pencil tricks and you will have a hard job trying to keep it. Your friends will try to take it from you. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c. each. FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.



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